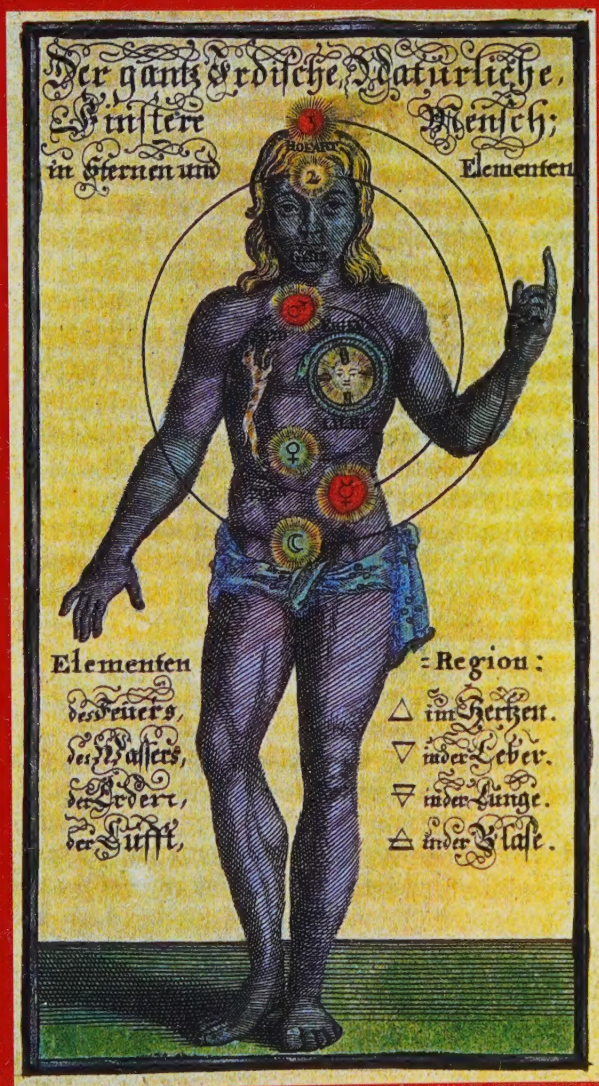


# Awakening to Divine Wisdom


## Christian Initiation

## Into Three Worlds

Johann Georg Gichtel



Arthur Versluis, translator and editor



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## Introduction

### What is Christian Theosophy?

Many people today seek deeper spiritual experience, but often cannot find much help in contemporary Christianity, which seems to them ossified and often consisting more in social gathering than in spiritual practice. This situation is made even worse by the almost total absence, in most seminaries, of the Christian mystical tradition generally. The absence of spiritual praxis in mainstream Protestantism and Roman Catholicism is undoubtedly why many people have turned to Buddhism, which in turn has helped numerous Christians recognize the more profound aspects of their own tradition. Certainly the time appears right for Christians to recover their mystical tradition and its most recent manifestation, Christian theosophy.

Theosophy, (the word meaning "wisdom of God") is the practical complement of theology. Whereas theology consists in the explication of theological principles spun from the rational mind, theosophy is the path of spiritual practice leading to direct spiritual experience. One could say that theologians make maps based on reports and hearsay; theosophers actually travel over the terrain and experience it for themselves. In a general sense, theosophy, as I have shown in my book *Theosophia: Hidden Dimensions of Christianity* (1994), is found from early Christianity through the middle ages and into the modern era, but its most developed forms appeared from the seventeenth century onward to the present.

Why have we not heard of Christian theosophy, and why so often confuse it with the late nineteenth century confabulations of Blavatsky's "Theosophical Society?" Essentially, general knowledge about theosophy has been suppressed. We can understand why this has happened when we consider the rationalist and materialist biases that have spawned the virulent aspects of modernity, ranging from technocracy to ecocide. From the seventeenth century to the present, mo-

ernity has taken hold and gained power by consistently excluding and denigrating more profound traditional ways of seeing the cosmos in favor of arrogant rationalism. External evidence of this may be seen in the systematic destruction of indigenous peoples not only in North America, but indeed around the globe, as I have discussed in my books on Native American traditions.<sup>1</sup>

Yet within European Protestant Christianity there has existed throughout modernity an hidden experiential tradition much more allied with those of indigenous peoples and with experiential yogic traditions like those of Hinduism and of Buddhism, as well as with the Eastern Orthodox hesychastic traditions of Russia and Greece, than with the dessicated forms of Protestantism that have come to predominate in modernity. If one is dedicated to developing a society bereft of any authentic spiritual praxis, whose science excludes by definition the transcendent dimensions of life, and whose main purpose is economic domination and exploitation (seeking to gain the whole world at the cost of soul and spirit) then we can well understand why one would suppress and scorn theosophy. Theosophy represents the deeper and higher dimensions of life that have been ignored in order for modernity to exist.

Modern Christian theosophy began with Jakob Böhme, (1575-1624) whose genius synthesized the major currents of European esotericism, including alchemy, Hermeticism, and German mysticism, in a series of vast works ranging from letters of spiritual advice to an extensive commentary on Genesis entitled *Mysterium Magnum*. Böhme's importance in theosophy can scarcely be exaggerated; one can even trace the history of theosophy as tantamount to the history of Böhme's influence, for he is the touchstone, cited by every major theosopher. At the same time, theosophy cannot be limited to the influence of any one author, not even Böhme, for it is founded not in books but in direct spiritual experience. And all the major theosophers, even the most erudite, concentrated on and valued prayer and the inward life far



more than booklearning.

But texts are nonetheless important in theosophy as guides to spiritual praxis. Those who would like to study the works of the major theosophers can turn to my anthology entitled *Wisdom's Book: The Sophia Anthology*, which includes many texts never before published in English. Virtually all the theosophic writings center on Sophia, or divine Wisdom, and all are concerned with spiritual guidance and awakening. In *Wisdom's Book* are some selections from Gichtel's voluminous letters; but *Awakening to Divine Wisdom* is not included, for it stands on its own as a major work of spiritual advice, and is here translated into English in its entirety for the first time ever. While its language may at times seem archaic, hidden in this book are many riches, and much that might even be termed Christian Tantrism. But before we turn to this topic, we should introduce the author.

### **Johann Georg Gichtel and His Circle**

To write about the life of Johann Georg Gichtel, (1638-1710) after Böhme among the most authoritative of our theosophers, is also to write about his works, for the two are very nearly inseparable. Indeed, the bulk of our information concerning Gichtel comes directly from his own hand, or from the hand of someone very close to him. For Gichtel was author of *Theosophia Practica*, an enormous seven volume collection of his letters along with his biography—838 letters dated from 1668 (when the author was thirty) to 1710, the year of his death, comprising some 4000 pages. If this source of biographical information is somewhat limited and slanted—Gichtel was nothing if not an irascible and polemical writer—its limitations are counterbalanced by the unparalleled glimpse they offer into the life of this theosopher, the “Hermit of Amsterdam.”

Gichtel's life began in Ratisbon, Germany, in March, 1638, and can be divided into three parts: from 1638 to 1664, when he began to encounter difficulties with the clerical authori-

ties in Ratisbon; from 1665 through 1667, when he moved about, staying for a time with Friedrich Breckling (1629-1711); and from 1668 to his death in 1710, the time during which he lived, wrote, and taught in Amsterdam. Naturally, most of our information about Gichtel (often hagiographical) comes from this last period, during which he established his community of the "Brethren of the Angelic Life," the *Engelsbrüder*, or the "Angelic Brethren," and become more generally known as a theosopher.

Gichtel's early years were not remarkable; his family was pious, his father a pharmacist, and Gichtel went to study law at Strasburg because he clearly showed scholarly talent. During this time he came to know Knorr von Rosenroth, the Christian Kabbalist, and studied under Johann Schmidt, Heinrich Böckler, and Philipp Jacob Spener, all renowned historians or theologians, particularly Spener. But in 1664, at the age of 26, Gichtel's life changed radically, for he began to realize something of his spiritual calling, and began to become directly involved in the turbulent Protestant reform movements of his day.<sup>2</sup>

Gichtel was always a combative sort, evidenced countless places in his letters, and certainly this comes through in the biography appended to his letters. There we read the following account of Gichtel's ouster from Ratisbon: Ratisbon ministers denounced Gichtel, thought he was "a heretic, an enthusiast," that he "came from Holland, and was an Anabaptist," and had him thrown in prison for thirteen weeks, "though he belonged to no sect, nor disputed with anyone."<sup>3</sup> One has to wonder about the latter; Gichtel was somewhat disputatious.

Brought before Johann Heinrich Ursinus—an intransigent man—and his fellow clergymen, Gichtel was tested for his faith, and his biographer gives the following version of these events:

Ursinus and his so-called clergy and consistories, not thinking as a lawyer he had any knowledge of eastern languages, wanted to drive



him into a corner by their learning, but were so well received they became silent as fish, and afterwards warned his brothers and sisters that he had a devil which knew how to handle Scripture, that no one could answer him, whereby they so frightened these, that all his conversation on the Scripture was fruitless, and his own mother told him to leave the ministers alone.<sup>4</sup>

Reading between the lines, one can surmise something of Gichtel's argumentative nature, but one is also reminded of Christ refuting the Pharisees and Sadducees, an allusion evidently intended by the author of the biography.

Although one would think Gichtel's denunciation and imprisonment would have been the low point of his life, in fact it was the turning point, for in prison he had a remarkable vision. Even though his biographer recounts this vision, it is better to offer it in Gichtel's own words:

In 1664 I lay in prison and was wrestling with Satan. . . . I suddenly fell to earth, and [was] exalted into the spirit, saw a large serpent lying in a three-fold coil around my heart; but in the midst of the circle, it became quite light, and in the light appeared the Lord in the form described by John under the seven candlesticks, who spoke with a deep sigh: If thy mercy, O Lord, were not my comfort, I should perish in my misery.

After these words the serpent was cut up into innumerable pieces, and cast like a flash so sensibly into the darkness of the entrails, that I thought all my insides were broken to bits.

Whereupon I recovered, feeling great strength of faith indeed, but learning that this was merely laying the ground to a bloody struggle, which has indeed continued until this hour, and it would take a book rather than a letter, were I to tell of it.<sup>5</sup>

This experience was really the beginning of Gichtel's subsequent life, for after this serpent-vision he was set free, travelled to Switzerland and then to Holland, where he took refuge for the rest of his life—all the while engaged in the spiritual struggle he describes here in its inception in prison.

In the winter of 1666, Gichtel arrived in Schwoll, Switzerland, where he was given shelter by Lutheran minister Friedrich Breckling, who made Gichtel choir leader of Breckling's congregation, appointed him curate of the church, and had him cook, wash, and make beds. During this time Gichtel did preach, but saw that there was little value in mere preaching—ministers, he thought, merely flung words at their congregations.<sup>6</sup> Gichtel's own fortunes followed Breckling, however, for by October, 1667, Breckling was being attacked by his fellow Lutheran ministers, and while Gichtel himself tried to defend Breckling (even though Gichtel and Breckling had already had a falling out) in a letter written 5 October 1667, Gichtel's support probably contributed to Breckling's own troubles.

Gichtel himself left Schwoll, ended up in Amsterdam, cold, with no money but two groats, and was approached there by a complete stranger who laid down six silver ducats and left.<sup>7</sup> This kind of miraculous event seemed to happen fairly regularly around Gichtel, whose debts were shortly paid off by a Dutch book dealer who, when he died just after Gichtel met him, left everything to Gichtel and these books, when sold, paid off Gichtel's debts. In fact, although Gichtel was to reside in Amsterdam for decades to come, he was supported all this time by friends or benefactors—he really did rely upon God to provide through those around him for his own sustenance and that of his colleagues or for the poor that they helped.

To read Gichtel's biography is to read Protestant hagriography: not for nothing is his biography entitled *The Wonderful and Holy Life of the Chosen Champion and Blessèd Man of God Johann Georg Gichtel*. Readers are advised to check their disbelief in miracles at this work's portals. For Gichtel's life grew more and not less miraculous as time went on, and his biography includes numerous events that defy our expectations or assumptions about this world and its laws. Gichtel himself told the tale to numerous correspondents, and his biographer offers it again, of how he and Breckling and

Breckling's wife waxed wroth at one another, so much so that Gichtel was forced to bed for over a year since "Breckling and his wife with their fiery prayers strove against his [Gichtel's] soul."<sup>8</sup> Eventually, however, an "invisible hand" lifted Gichtel from his bed to the ground, words of forgiveness were spoken, and "Satan's powers were broken."

If Gichtel's friendship with Breckling ended rather nastily, his friendship with Alhart de Raedt [Raadt] ended in, if possible, an equally or even worse situation. Raedt was a professor of theology at Harderwijk who had had to leave his chair because of another theological controversy. No doubt introduced to Gichtel by Breckling, Raedt and Gichtel became fast friends in 1682, and in the words of Gichtel's biographer, "they would have imparted their hearts to each other, and no one that visited them left them unmoved."<sup>9</sup> But this harmonious situation was unfortunately soon to change.

For eventually Gichtel began to suspect that all was not well with Raedt, that indeed a "foreign spirit" had crept into him. In a defining incident, Gichtel and Raedt prayed for a young man who had gone mad, and the more Raedt prayed, the more insane the young man became, until eventually he committed suicide by hanging. In a later such incident, a man with whom Raedt lived for a time (after the rift with Gichtel) went quite insane and had to be chained, eventually escaping and coming to Gichtel looking "quite wild and terrible." Through prayer Gichtel was able to help restore the man to sanity again.

But there is more to tell about Raedt's history and motivation. During the spring of 1683, a rival for Raedt had arrived in Gichtel's circle, "the elect man of God," Johann Wilhelm Ueberfeldt. Soon Ueberfeldt and Raedt were engaged in bitter dispute, and as Bernard Gorceix notes, "The exact cause of the dispute between Raedt and Ueberfeldt is clear: their mutual rivalry for the favor of Gichtel."<sup>10</sup> For Ueberfeldt, Raedt was nothing less than "evil personified," the envious envoy of Satan himself.<sup>11</sup> Gichtel himself said that Raedt like Lucifer was "seduced by pride and self-love," and "wanted

to be the best beloved disciple."

In 1684, Gichtel invited all the Angelic Brethren to sit together at a table, and Raedt sat apart and cried, because of his offenses. Gichtel said three times that they would keep together in love, after which they all went for a walk in the garden, "whereupon Raedt said the words of Christ, 'Whoso is not with us, is against us.'" As they stood in a circle, Gichtel seized the opportunity, saying that since they had made a covenant, the devil would surely try them, and that they must pray for one another, or the great love would be turned into violent wrath, "which by God's impulse he repeated three times also."<sup>12</sup> Thus was their destiny sealed; and Gichtel never was to see Raedt again.

For in 1684 Raedt moved to Warmond, and much later to Utrecht. But more significantly, Raedt denounced Gichtel and his brethren most violently, denunciations that he continued all the way to his death in 1716. Gichtel and his biographer maintain that Raedt turned to alcohol, sought to make gold with the philosopher's stone, and lured a companion of his into drink as well, making drunken attacks upon Gichtel and his fellow theosophers, and giving up the chastity that had been enjoined upon all the Angelic Brethren. Indeed, according to Gichtel's biographer, Raedt went so far as to scoff at all godliness, raging against the truth. How valid these accusations are is, of course, unverifiable.

But it is certain that between this time and Gichtel's death in 1710, his reputation spread not only in Amsterdam, but in Germany as well. Gichtel corresponded with numerous theosophers or aspirants, and knew what was happening in theosophical circles elsewhere in Europe. As the center of the Angelic community in Amsterdam, Gichtel was a spiritual advisor to both men and women, and people not part of this group would also seek him out for advice. Gichtel cannot be accused of not having clear views: he tended to see the world very much in terms of the struggle between evil and the good, and this perspective resulted in characterizing people and events perhaps more strongly than we would to-



day. But it is no accident that his primary work is his collected letters.

Gichtel's work, like that of Dr. John Pordage and some of the other English theosophers, represents not history, but hierohistory. Essentially, hierohistory refers to the theosophical tendency to record the dates and times of individual spiritual events or revelations. In fact, one often gets the impression that, for theosophers, hierohistory takes absolute precedence over the progression of linear time that for we moderns constitutes the whole of history. Theosophers' histories—notably Gichtel's four thousand pages of letters and biography—are strikingly absent references to most current events or significant people. For theosophers generally, and for Gichtel especially, what we moderns call history is of little importance—life should be seen, they insist, in a spiritual light, as a supernatural combat between good and evil, the field for which is human life. In a sense, Gichtel's *Theosophia Practica* is simply an extended, even vast hierohistory, the specific cycles of revelation for Gichtel and his circle chronicled both at the beginning and at the end of his seven volume magnum opus of letters.

Gichtel's death is forecast in hagiographical fashion at the end of *Theosophia Practica* by reference to archetypal cycles of time. Sophia appeared to Gichtel in definite temporal cycles during his life, and these cycles culminated forty days before his death, when "the heavenly mother of wisdom revealed herself anew in 1709, December 13." This time of revelation was the greatest, Gichtel said, since the time of Raedt's apostasy, and reached its zenith after Gichtel's physical death early in 1710.<sup>13</sup> The cycle of revelation was renewed in subsequent years among the remaining Angelic community.

Gichtel, perhaps best known as the "hermit of Amsterdam," nonetheless was also active as an editor of the first major collection of Böhme's writings, entitled *Theosophia Revelata*, published in three successive editions: 1682, 1715, and 1730. Between 1680 and 1682, Gichtel and his colleagues accomplished this remarkable project of collating disparate texts and pro-

ducing a single, fourteen volume edition in octavo. This was in fact the primary German edition of Böhme until the work of Werner Buddecke in the twentieth century.<sup>14</sup> These two multivolume series—Böhme's work in *Theosophia Revelata*, and Gichtel's own letters in *Theosophia Practica*—were deliberately complementary, Böhme offering the primary revelational paradigm of theosophy, and Gichtel concentrating on its practical implications through guiding letters.

Gichtel's primary written work, as we have seen, was his voluminous collection of letters, but he left one other major work behind as well. This work is a treatise, dated 1696, entitled *Eine kurze Eröffnung und Anweisung der dreyen Principien und Welten Im Menschen*, or, *A Brief Revelation and Instruction on the Three Principles and Worlds in Man*, attributed to Gichtel and Johann Georg Graber and published in 1723, here presented under the short title of *Awakening to Divine Wisdom*. This work—which has consistently been published in German and French under the erroneous title *Theosophia Practica*—includes some very important illustrations on planetary symbolism and the human microcosm, detailing the process of theosophical illumination that is discussed at length in the text. Although this work will reveal itself through extended study, some introduction undoubtedly would be helpful.

### ***Awakening to Divine Wisdom and the Mysteries of Eros***

No one can read Gichtel's letters or biography without recognizing his insistence on celibacy. In this respect, Gichtel went far beyond Böhme, who himself after all was married and did have children. Indeed, some modern authors go so far as to term Gichtel misogynist, a charge not without some basis, but one that ignores Gichtel's writings and reasons for his evident asceticism. It may seem contradictory to speak of the mysteries of eros in regards to an author so insistent on celibacy, but in fact Gichtel is emphasizing individual transmutation that entails bringing one's inward energies—emotional and subtle energies—to a higher state so that rather

than envy, hatred, and confusion controlling one, these energies are illuminated and transmuted. It is the path from selfish lust to selfless love.

We should remember that although Protestantism during this time included a full spectrum of approaches to sexuality, from the wholehearted embrace of sexuality among some, to the communalism of the Eller group, to the radical celibacy of most theosophers in Germany, England, and Pennsylvania, for theosophers both male and female, celibacy was the norm, not the exception. Celibacy—characteristic of Christian monasticism generally, and certainly common among lay people during the early centuries of Christianity—is not a peculiarity of Gichtel, nor is it at all unusual in the context either of Christianity generally, or of theosophy particularly. Dr John Pordage and his group, Jane Lead and her Philadelphians, Kelpius and his Pennsylvanian community of lay monastics, all enjoined celibacy too, on men and women alike.

When we take the fundamental aim of theosophy—creating apostolic groups oriented to spiritual realization—into account, we can see why Gichtel and most other theosophers enjoined celibacy. For essentially, the theosophy means developing in the modern world, groups of people whose lives are each completely dedicated to spiritual illumination. Unanimously, mystics and saints throughout the Christian tradition have held that to pursue the spiritual quest wholeheartedly means the renunciation of the earthly Venus, or lust, and the channeling of one's energies toward spiritual realization. The Eastern Orthodox monastic admonitions of the *Philokalia* are exemplary in this regard, and certainly not alone. Gichtel and the other theosophers stand squarely in the broad Christian tradition here.

But we should point out that there definitely is a transposition of sexual energies onto a different, higher level in theosophy as exemplified in the writings of Gichtel. It is true that Gichtel rejected offers of marriage by wealthy women; it is true that Gichtel remained a celibate bachelor layman all his life. But none of this represents misogyny—it does not

reflect a hatred of women, only a rejection of sexual relationships. For we also see in Gichtel's letters a transposition of sexual symbolism into Sophianic mysticism: he speaks of Sophianic kisses, of the Sophianic "marriage bed," and of consummating the love relationship between the soul and Sophia.

In conjoining mysticism and sexual symbolism, of course, theosophers like Gichtel are hardly alone, for in Judeo-Christianity this enterprise goes back to the Song of Songs of Solomon, and appears in the works of Origen and other Christian fathers, as well as in medieval works including those of Dante, the troubadours, and countless mystics both male and female, as I discuss in my book *The Mysteries of Love*. It is, it would seem, only natural for Christian mystics to use the language of sexual love to speak of the divine love it reflects, for after all, what better language do we have to express delight in and union with another?

There is after all a complementary relationship between the "lustful Venus" that Gichtel combats—human desire to satisfy carnal passions—and the celestial Virgin Sophia. If mankind fell through Eve, Franz von Baader was later to write, it is only natural that humanity should also be redeemed through Sophia. For the primal fall of Adamic man was, in this view, a falling away from the primordial paradise of the Virgin Sophia, and the regeneration of man must therefore be through a return to the Virgin Sophia, who is the feminine aspect of the Logos, the Bride of Christ in eternity. Given this perspective, we can see how Gichtel would seek to turn people away from sensual attachment and toward spiritual regeneration in marriage to the Virgin Sophia.

### **Spiritual Awakening and Wisdom**

Sophianic mysticism appears throughout Christianity, from Gnosticism through the appearance of Philosophia to the imprisoned Boethius, through the works of Böhme, and Gichtel's primary contribution was elaborating the Sophianic language of theosophic practice. Certainly he did not invent



Sophianic mysticism, but Gichtel and his angelic community represent an archetypal form of Sophianic theosophy that was to continue from the seventeenth into the twentieth centuries, and that included both men and women. For an esoteric community or tradition to continue that long, it has to be based, not just on doctrine, but on spiritual experience; it has to have individual spiritual meaning for those who are attracted to it. Gichtel's Sophianic mysticism is foremost a matter of individual realization, demonstrable not least by Gichtel's letters, which are far more spiritual advice to individuals than doctrinal formulation.

But inevitably, for Gichtel to be able to offer coherent advice to theosophical aspirants, he had to have a coherent doctrinal understanding that informed all that he said. Naturally, this understanding must be seen in the context of Böhmean theosophy: Gichtel makes occasional reference to such works as Böhme's *Three Principles*, or *The Signature of All Things*, and Böhme's complex cosmology underlies almost all of Gichtel's writings. However, Gichtel does not simply reiterate Böhme, for his work includes definite doctrinal emphases one does not find in Böhme himself. As one might expect, all of these emphases have a practical focus.

In a sense, Gichtel's doctrines are simpler than those of Böhme: he emphasizes how our primary human task is to transmute wrath into love, how we are each ruled by our "astral" "constellation," often in the form of our limited dogmatic Christian beliefs, and how we must penetrate beyond this astral shell to spiritual reality. Böhme is often confusing not only in terminology, but also in formulation, whereas Gichtel is comparatively simple and straightforward. We customarily surround ourselves with an astral shell of wrathful emotionalism and rationality, he tells us, and we must through faith, humility, and prayer let divine power shine through this shell and illuminate us completely.

Although Gichtel's letters comprise some four thousand pages, in fact his central doctrines are not abstruse, and can be elucidated rather easily. Gichtel wrote

If any want to strive, let him strive against himself, let him overcome the fiery dragon, viz his own will and self love in himself, then he shall have a reward. My brother's failings must also be mine, we must take them on ourselves, confess them of God, and pray for mercy, that the sin may be forgiven to. . . our brethren.<sup>15</sup>

The origin of sin, Gichtel writes, is simply this, that we no longer "know God's light, viz, Sophia, our heavenly flesh and blood, but look after the light of reason, which can do no more than the other animals, feed and multiply us."<sup>16</sup> We must deny ourselves, Gichtel insists, we must overcome our pride in reason and ourselves.

In fact, it may be useful to see just how telling Gichtel's criticism of ordinary outward religion (which Böhme called "Babel") really could be. In a letter, Gichtel writes that when we live merely according to reason, and are like animals,

we consider ourselves happy, go to Church and the Lord's Supper, let the parsons take care of our souls; Christ has done everything for us; we stand in the historical clown's faith, and do not want to know anything of the cross of Christ, self denial.<sup>17</sup>

From this quotation alone, we can see how uncompromising Gichtel could be, and how his emphasis on individual spiritual regeneration might well appear threatening to many apparently pious, good Christians. For Gichtel insists that we confront what following Christ really means—and in his view it does not mean acquiescing in an outwardly pious show.

Rather, *Awakening to Divine Wisdom* is about spiritual practice and direct spiritual experience. Clearly Gichtel writes from the perspective of one who has already passed along a path and wishes to guide those that also would go along that way. Gichtel writes that "I want to communicate to the reader the best I can what God's love gives me, and also my own experience." (V.71) We are exhorted to persevere like Gichtel himself, who underwent many trials

Until finally I, through His great compassion, passed through the time of great endurance, and landed in a safe harbor, where my soul finds peace and the Driver (Treiber) with his anxiety and doubt-afflictions cannot hinder or reach me.

10. But what it has cost in sweat, earnestness, and fiery prayer, is best known by one who knows the heart. (VI.9-10)

We must be persistent and endure many trials before we reach peace, Gichtel warns, for the more we are drawn to the Divine, the more our Adversary and the Spirit of this World (*spiritus mundi*) seek to oppose us.

Gichtel's work explicitly calls the reader to take heaven by violence—that is, by sustained spiritual struggle against evil (II.5). At the center of Gichtel's counsel here is Christ's harrowing of hell. Gichtel writes that the practitioner is called to "storm [Satan] in hell" through faith:

14. Here must all evil spirits be thrown down by the scepter of the love of Jesus and bow their knees before him,—

15. There the love, which suffered everything, takes Satan and all the hordes of hell prisoner, and drives them together, so that the evil spirits coagulate in one another like a sea, standing between this world and the hellish kingdom, and they must parade before Jesus . . . Whereby Jesus Christ, God and man, is master over all his and our enemies in us in all three worlds,— (IV.13-18).

*Awakening to Divine Wisdom* is filled with the Böhmean language of contraries, and points readers toward the faithful's victory over Satan through the love of Christ. But the combative flavor of this work is distinctively Gichtel's.

How does one attain spiritual awakening? Through prayer. Gichtel devotes a whole chapter to this topic alone, and himself says that it is the most important. He writes that

Right prayer according to my experience and practice is not a matter of many words, but rather a sinking of the soul-spirit or will in

God and a giving birth to the holy Trinity and Wisdom through the seven Forms of Nature (Planets),—

27. Which through the magia or Belief-desire comes to pass—in one in whom the will is held fast in the magia and desire—what the will bids. (VI.26-27)

This practice is similar to the practice of hesychastic prayer in Eastern Orthodoxy, and also bears similarities to Buddhist meditation practices, particularly in the advice that prayer consists in “a sinking of the soul-spirit or will into God,” giving birth to Wisdom.

Certainly there are obstacles on the path, but those can be overcome by the principle of love, holding to love in the imagination. Gichtel points us toward this means of overcoming difficulties:

I have experienced that to go through the first dark principle, the severe anger of God, is a strict or severe path, and requires not only seriousness of purpose, but also an unfrightenable courage, which power does not always hold in people—

36. So let the loving disciple of experience teach you, that you must hold love strongly in your desire and Imagination, and never permit it to lapse.

37. Thus you will everywhere find courage—if frightened by the Anger, if Doubt and Unbelief assail you, you need only curse them with confidence, and speculate with the Imagination in love; so you will experience that the Anger softens and falls away. (VI.35-37)

Essentially, the praxis consists in transmutation of wrath into love, akin in some respects to what in Tibetan Buddhism is called *tong-len* (giving love and taking negativity).

Indeed, there are surprisingly many parallels between Gichtel’s theosophy and Mahayana Buddhism. For instance, Gichtel discussed on numerous occasions in his letters his having taken onto himself the difficulties of others through prayer, an attitude strikingly close to that of the Buddhist bodhisattva, who also seeks to take upon himself others’ suf-



fering. Or again, Gichtel discusses in *Awakening to Divine Wisdom* the circulation of inward fluids (literally, *säfte*, or juices) and how the discipline of theosophic prayer transmutes the inward bodily centers, particularly those of the heart, the throat, and the head. These discussions are of course not identical to Buddhist Tantrism and its teachings regarding chakras and inner channels in the body, but there certainly are correspondences between them.

In fact, such parallels are precisely why this book by Gichtel already has been brought into more general awareness even though it has not, until now, been available in English: some writers have held that Gichtel's *Awakening* shows Europe has had esoteric doctrines regarding chakras and the subtle body just as has Buddhism.<sup>18</sup> While such assertions are more or less true, facile insistence that one tradition is identical to another can bring about many misunderstandings, and one must be careful. Certainly Gichtel, like all the theosophers, would insist that it is more important to realize the tradition's meaning for oneself than to make an intellectual tossed salad of academic comparisons.

There is, after all, a difference between scholarly comparison of different religious traditions, and practical syncretism. In the field of scholarship, it is better first to try and understand a particular tradition completely, on its own terms, than to begin with comparison to the foreign—but we should also remember that for Gichtel and his colleagues, theosophy is a discipline and exists in the domain of spiritual praxis. Hence if theosophy itself has a living future, it may well be in spiritual practice that conjoins theosophic and Eastern Orthodox traditions, or even theosophic and Buddhist traditions. Arguably the greatest contemporary significance of this book by Gichtel (and of theosophic works more generally), is not only to reveal that profound European esoteric spiritual discipline exists, but perhaps also to act as a foundation for an authentic deep meeting of European and Asian esoteric traditions.

This may be the best place to conclude our introduction to

this little book by Gichtel. For Gichtel's letters and life stand out as confrontational: they confront us with questions about what we can believe in, about paranormal events, about what Christianity really consists in. Gichtel was known for his confrontations, from his battles in Ratisbon against the theologians in his twenties, all the way to his countless fallings out with various people in the Netherlands, Germany, and elsewhere. He was not, apparently, an easy man to get along with. But perhaps more than any other theosopher, Gichtel's work forces us to confront ourselves, who we are, and what religion truly means. And this is, after all, the fundamental practical work of theosophy itself.

**Johann Georg Gichtel**

*Awakening to Divine Wisdom:*

*Christian Initiation into Three Worlds*

## Preface

1. The beloved reader here receives against all expectation what he has hoped for through long years. These are the figures of inward man, which our author has kept hidden for fifteen years, until his life's end, and we have still ten years after held them.

2. These were also to be kept well hidden away, until love had moved the spirit to release a new edition, to please her lover, and at last permission was given and we were strengthened to release a new edition, bringing forth the new imprint of the blessed and expanded third edition of the annointed letters—as a beloved ornament; at the same time the reader is given a key, a spirit of understanding through which he can better comprehend what he reads.

3. We are delighted over God's great friendliness to you, in kindly heart, ungrudgingly share the good with one another, and praise God therefore.

4. Receive then this gift, which love gives, (the edition already very far advanced), with a heart seeking God, for it is dedicated, like all the writing of this author, to your soul's health and profit.

5. The beloved reader will also recognize that we have given a short introduction to these figures, which accompanies them at appropriate places in the work. We are thereby made capable and are of a good mind to receive God's spirit as opened here, the Word given to us, the request answered.

6. Also to a certain extent in order to fulfill what the author himself could not: one can only express the holy Kingdom insofar as the Holy Spirit, which has the key thereto, gives expression through one.

7. The same outpouring of mercy as the process Jesus went

through, we too must pass through; what our beloved Redeemer earlier in our humanity did, we must, through what in spirit proceeds into our own time in Jesus's power, who is the beginning and the completion of our faith.

8. God be praised, that we experienced the day for which our author in his time so longed. The Birth-work with the outer spirit (which force also depends upon the outer man) overcomes the natural power of the old man; so that the Virgin calls to her bridegroom, and imposes this hard and strenuous work on him.

9. Therein we have also Jesus with us, who in the younger years of our struggles nourishes us, for the common benefit of all who strive with him. God be praised, Amen.

## Foreword

### To the God and Wisdom Loving Reader

1. Insofar as I am very simple, and mindful that in this actual, coarse, blustering world, wherein the true pearl of knowledge of God is trodden underfoot, and the true Lover torn asunder, these opened flowers of paradise have been allotted me in my great, earnest struggle, so have my beloved companions through their manifold entreaties, convinced me, those who have traced the *Mysterium of God* in its inward ground, to give guidance toward the Light, so that one will experience its play with one's own eyes, and contemplate the Light in itself.

2. Also a remembrance and warning, because Adam disregarded chance, and awakened the cold, grim, furious darkness in his life's form, and in all his descendents and children awakened too a powerful struggle of evil against the good, of darkness and anger and naughting against light, love, and the yes.

3. Thus always be on your guard, diligent and earnestly watch and pray, and keep a sharp eye out for all evil, poisonous influences of the hellish and earthly constellations;



keep the little tongue exactly on the balance, or pay attention to desire, lust, and imagination in your heart, lest the good be overcome, and your fall and destruction be even greater.

4. For it certainly easily comes to pass, if your soul is a little uncertain and inattentive, that it fearfully turns downward toward the earthly, and is impregnated with the earthly lust of the spirit of this world, or a raging thought against your brother appears, and in its arrogance, the angel falls from its throne.

5. Then hunger all three principles around the soul: each seeks the mastery, and struggles so long therefore, until it has been blessed, bound and made subject by the strongest, namely the light, which is alone almighty, as I have well experienced in many long years of struggle.

6. And it is not enough, that many with a good intention earnestly begin, even eight, nine, ten or more years endeavor, if they finally carelessly not only give away themselves, but also provoke other weak hearts, and with them fall through pride into eternal ruin.

7. Rather one must consecrate one's whole lifetime, with body, soul, and spirit, as also good and blood, devote oneself eternally to Him, calling upon His genuine Mercy, eternal truth and constancy, that one may experience the rebirth. Stand fast by Christ, your head, commit your life to the generation of truth.

8. And what can help him, who loves his earthly life and clings to it? This is truly destructive, and he will finally, as Christ said, be lost. It is much better that man does not lay his hand upon a plough, and in his simplicity patiently waits for his master's call, or is impelled in the heart of God's spirit, with humble conduct, to take reckoning of his inward powers, whether he is putting ten against twenty thousand, and go rather slowly, than that he fly to despise the enemy, and finally be overcome.

9. Whereupon I write this warning, that it is certainly joyous to follow the master's path, but still one may as yet

know no earnest conflict; then the begining is generally sweet and joyous, but if the soul truly undertakes to bring its will out of the outer constellation and turn it to God's centrum, to forsake everything visible and to pass through the true form of the Fire, this costs much work and bloody sweat, and this the soul must struggle through with God and men.

10. Where you now love life and again want to go back to see it, there comes the devil with seven raging spirits, to barricade you in all forms, your poor soul, that you may spend the whole time of your life in great want, suffering, hunger, and earthly care as the World-spirit's slave and the devil's prisoner, and finally that you must with trembling, anxiety, and lamentation pass through God's fire, whereof I have seen many unfortunate, lamentable examples in my time.

11. You must in your time be your own maker: if you remain in humility and make an angel of yourself, so you will be an angel; but if you make a proud, high-flying devil out of yourself, so then you will be a devil. Don't make God charge you on that account.

12. The fire of the true Form is the boundary: which figure I certainly take out of Böhme's writing on the three-fold life, but which the innocent have placed in such figures, because man is become so earthly and outward-looking, that he always speculates over what is to be sought inwardly very near by him in the centrum of his soul, far above the constellation's firmament in high eternity.

13. Also in the following figure [on the back cover of this book] is visible to the eye, how in one the three worlds are in one another or under one another, how the good God has opened them to me, has indeed introduced me in my spirit to all the centers. For I only report the center. If one were to make a great circle or globe, and raise this up in another, that would convey it; what I have seen in the spirit, so have I also related.

14. And however well one grasps these views—because

they stand in holy mercy and truth, victory, and triumph—so will an earnest struggler out of his sensation and his taste therein well verify, as he inwardly turns to God.

15. Therefore I have in the fifth chapter discussed Michael's struggle with the dragon, how there arises in the creature through inner divorce or separation many oppositional wills out of one will, also which Temptations [trials] the Virgin's son must experience, to marry and be wholly blessed in the spiritual marriage.

16. And finally the sixth chapter discusses prayer and the *Mysterium*, what namely in spirit and truth real prayer is, how one learns to experience it, because it is the seeker's indispensable sword.

17. The beloved reader takes this in love, takes it for his use, and I thank God, from whom I have received it—in this rich love I commend both the reader and myself to this Christian prayer.





## **The First Chapter**

### **Preface**

1. God-seeking reader! We reveal here the wheel of rebirth according to the three principles, undivided and completely, so that you may see how the form or powers in the new man are born in the heart in this order.
2. Imagine it living in your heart, so may you learn to understand from our author in the following Figures, because the Understanding exists inwardly in the heart.
3. Especially I want to show you the entrance to the first-created image of God before the Fall, which stands hidden in the spirit, which the author knows by praxis and [also will show] in the figures of the completed man, out of the new birth in Christ that is to be developed in you.
4. And in the rebirth you will also come to really know in essence, if you earnest follow the writer.

### **OF THE GREAT MYSTERIUM OF HOLY REVELATION ACCORDING TO TIME AND ETERNITY IN HUMAN FORM**

1. If we want to view and observe man in his inward deep birth then we must only turn over our soul out of the earthly astral and elementary life in[to] the inner holy life of Jesu Christi and call upon this precious doctor in his mercy, in order that he might by grace again open our eyes, which were closed by the devil in paradise, for we are born blind by nature; thereby we open again our lost light-eye and can know and view God in us; else it will remain a closed mysterium inconceivable by our reasoning star-eye.
2. Because what we see outwardly in man and his tranformation is apart from the realm of speech and the natural dominion of sensual reason that we share in common with all animals; and when man reaches his birth-time [ie, death] so he goes like all animals again into his mother, the earth. And there will be many who wish that there be

no resurrection, in order that his works may not come into the light.

3. Now what I have received from the grace of beloved God, I have not buried like an unworthy worm, the knowledge in myself or selfhood, but rather have a desire to share it for use and want to offer these figures in human form, whether the one or the other, in order that in them one can view and find the constellation of God and may glimpse him in the spirit.

4. For I in my youth also had sought thereafter, because I had read that Moses, Joshua, David, and other holy men had spoken with God and I spent many half days wandering in the field and looking at heaven, but my vision could not be attained.

5. By the grace of God, finally I experienced God inwardly face to face, and his heaven opened in me; also he spoke from mouth to mouth in my soul, in ens and in mentality—which refreshed me not a little; and also the reflection [Gegenliebe] of my dear Jesus was made very fiery, so that I was bound with him with body, soul, and spirit, never more to be separated from him or to enter into suffering or melancholy, wholly confident that he would for all eternity not take his spirit from me, nor would I be separated from him.

6. Hence what he has truly done: to him be all nobility, might, strength, riches, and glory in all eternity! Amen!

7. Man is actually in his outward and inner birth a three-fold constellation, as can be seen in this figure, which lives in a ever-driving and hungry desire after his center; it anxiously circles round and turns, seeking to find peace: and when it attains it [the center] it can still find no peace, until it comes again into its first origin, out of which everything was created and born.

8. The first is the outer constellation and the master and guide of the natural man, which drives all arts, works of the hands, studies, and business, good and evil, rich and poor, makes men high and low, as is visible to the eye! This

regiment derives from Adam's fall and all his children are under its spell, so that we can't escape it in this world without rebirth and hard struggle.

9. This life with its seven forms [planets] of outward nature, winds itself until the heart, the sun, which has its root in fire, whence its brilliance and appearance. In these seven forms has the devil, that old serpent, slipped in and overpowered the soul, as Apoc. 5 has it.

10. The eighth form is the fire-world with the fiery constellation and is in the greater world as in the little [micro-cosm]: in the middle; it is the border between outer and inner man; in the rebirth the light-world is in the middle, wherein is Jesus, who has subdued the fire-world in our humanity.

11. The root of the fire-world is the dark world—regarding the primeval state of darkness see Jakob Böhme: *Drei Principia* 21§17—with the dark constellation, which the fire-world holds imprisoned in itself, with all devils and damned souls; it is the separating border between good and evil, a "threshing place," and nothing impure is permitted into the inner heaven, to God.

12. Now in this fire-world stands the Cherub with his two-sided sword and protects the entrance to the inner tree of life, which one must either pass through in this life, or after this life one must experience its sharpness; where then at the end of our life stands Moses with his sharp law and the devil with his register of sins, which can testify of all experiences, and warns all men that they should not save their penitence until their last.

13. For of this sharpness no human tongue can speak. O blessed is he who in this time [life] has purified himself and has come to Jesus; for over him death has no power. But woe unto him who has wasted his time here, because he will howl and gnash his teeth, curse the day of his birth and wish that he never were born as we read in Jer. 20/14 and Apoc. 6/16.

14. Out of this fire-world or, indeed, between this fire and

the tincture as the ninth form were the Angels and Adam's soul created, as is written in the Scriptures, (Heb. 1 / 7). He makes his angels into spirits and his servants are fireflames.

15. The hidden dark world holds in itself the three first forms until the fire and outside the fire is called also hell: which is the severe might of God, where the devil strives and has made himself a hell, just like Adam.

16. Now he [the devil] should have remained hidden in the fire, after Christ again closed him up in it, if man with his sins and abominations in this world had not opened [the way] and endeavored himself.

17. If man penetrated through the Cherub's sword, so the divide between God and man is overcome, so the heavenly Sophia greets him in the ninth form and enlivens his soul with unspeakable sweetness and clothes him again with heavenly being; then is he again an Angel of God, who dwells in heaven and can speak with God.

18. Because in these new clothes can he first come before the Holy Trinity and serve the all-holiest God with prayers, intercessions, and incense offerings of the spirit and in truth serve as a Melchizadekian priest of the highest.

19. And now they long for their goal, namely, to be taken as a bride into the inner bride-chamber, which could not happen until they had penetrated the forms of fire and withstood their testing years.

20. For the Father takes no Son for his beloved Sophia or Jesus for marriage and leads him not into the bridal bed, unless he be pure and has withstood the testing. Also the heavenly Sophia is not entrusted as your paramour unless you be proven many times over faithful, because she was betrayed by Adam.

21. And when she kisses her dear paramour during the dark desire and visits him with trust and quickening, so that he won't become disheartened or lose hope, for this is not a longlasting condition: she returns soon again to the inward man as in her lightprinciple. Therefore is patience and humility necessary.



22. But whoever seeks to sidestep [all this] and with sulking, stamping, and violence to sleep with her, he must know that God has no pleasure in him and will not permit his dear bride to enter his character; because only the humble and gentle-hearted receive grace.

23. The tenth number is the Trinity: before it now must the soul-spirit stand still and sing "Holy, holy, holy" with all the heavenly host. We humans cannot conceive of this without the Virgin Sophia.

24. And we must dig very deep, [if] we want to view her in her revelation in inward virginal images, according to the three principles and born out of the virginal image itself: which is a most hidden secret and only known by those who live engaged to the heavenly Virgin Sophia.

25. Thus the reader can easily conceive out of this figure that God is much nearer in him than outside him over the earthly constellation in high eternity. And it is only here that we can turn-about our soul and turn our desire inwards and crave God in us, and not let this slip away [lit.: drain away] until the precious Sophia with the Holy Ghost answers our soul's desire and leads us from grade to grade.

26. Because we would not be able to grasp everything one time, because the wheel of nature always turns, and we can only see the depths of the Godhead in a dark mirror for an instant.

27. The first glimpse is very tender, and it is impossible to grasp everything until the spirit comes through long practice in the depths, and brought the *Mysterium Magnum* to the Understanding, as we learned out of some experience, and also in the fifth chapter have explained something.

28. Because it is not as if someone sees something and holds its image in his thought, whereof he can then speak: No, but rather the soul must through knowledge become a being<sup>19</sup>, and go many times through the fire before it is fixed.

29. Because this [rational] investigation is not the most noble, but rather must taste, experience, and feel for itself,

which no tongue can express, and the lover also can never conceive merely from reading of the depths—because he must go into Being himself, and follow inwardly through the fire, in order to bring his experience to paper, so you will well understand that this is far more profoundly tasted and experienced in the soul than what one finds printed in books.

30. Know then that we need no book in the world outside the Bible, if we only learn to read our inward book of the three principles in us; because it is so full of wonder that human tongues cannot express it and those who have not experienced it could not believe it.

31. And the illuminated writer only stammers over it, because he can find no words with which to speak of it, and must use likenesses from outward nature, in order that he can give the seeker guidance toward the deeper meaning.

32. But because man is become so wholly outwardly and animal-like, and strives only after the temporal treasures of this world, loves his own life and despises the eternal, atemporal God, so it remains rightly sealed from him.

33. Because what should a swine do with a golden necklace, and what should a chicken do with a pearl? They tread everything underfoot and kick it away, because they don't know what it is.

34. But one whose heart hungers after God and his knowledge, who walks in humility and whose desire is simple, meets it without a great, difficult, anxious search. Because God is love, and loves the lowest, who regards himself unworthy of his great love, and is often too stupid to hold to the knowledge of God.

35. The arrogant and proud reason-spirits are the enemy of God, and God turn his back because they hold themselves to be wise and learned, and want to read with their reason-glasses in God's book of mysteries.

36. Whoever prays to God and his Holy Spirit, and does not leave off until he is heard, his is the best and most

certain way, and he will receive a guide who will lead him in all depths and open all locks and doors, as all enlightened men testify and teach by their own example; outside this there is no right finding.

37. Thus the hungry seeker is permitted to remain in his studies no only in reading and seeking through writings alone, but rather must think about the followers of the ways and follow the way himself through prayer, hate earthly life, and seek inwardly in himself, as I myself have done; so will he also find that teachings and instructions are from God.

38. It is here as Christ said: Who asks, receives; who seeks, finds; who knocks, will be answered. Because the treasure lies buried deep in the soul and is guarded and kept secret by God's wrath, which must before everything be overcome by the love of Jesus; before this is no finding; because he holds powerfully fast what he has secreted in himself.

39. Hence Christ teaches us to wrestle and struggle in order to come through this narrow gate: for this is a great earnestness necessary, as is seen in Jakob, who said to God: You have said to me, Lord, go again in your land and to your friends, I will be with you; have no doubts, and travel.

40. Thus must you also do, to develop in the love of Jesus, also never permitting your will to come out of his wonder and holding fast to the promise in faith, knowing that God cannot lie and having no doubts in your heart.

41. Because the wrath of God penetrates you with his sharp No in body and soul and seeks until the ground, whether you are rooted fast in Jesus; and if you then find that he cannot overcome the Word Jesus in your heart, so he finally lets you sink into his sharpness.

42. Then the dawn in the love of Jesus breaks in your heart and transmutes the wrath in a great compassion. I wish you, dear reader, that you may experience this taste in your soul and enjoy, what words cannot express.

43. Now the deeper the soul is buried in itself, the nearer it

comes to God, until finally it stands still before the Holy Trinity, where it then first experiences a deep recognition.

44. Then the spirit of God goes with the soul into the outward nature, and moves back and forth through the birth of the One as the majesty in the trinity, through the seven Forms of Nature [planets]; and there the soul experiences more unspeakable joy in such knowledge than in all the treasures of the whole world.

45. Because what could be dearer to a heart than God, eternal love, whose sweet love's taste transcends all human reason?; and if also the greatest speaker and poet worked his art, still he could not express such a thing.

46. And many souls on the day of revelation will regret that they were so near such grace, and they would pursue it to the end, but it is no longer to be taken.

47. Because in this affixed figure the fire is placed in the eighth form, which is definitely in the form of eternal nature in the fourth, so the unpracticed heart will be like a bandage before the eyes.

48. But which serves for news that in this figure is shown the beginning of outward nature, which, like the human life itself, turns inward from without, and is threefold.

49. Namely the outward, earthly, then the astral fire-life, which belong together, and are the condition of the outward nature life: and the inner fire-life with its root in the darkness is the condition of the inner spirit or light-life.

50. But when the forms of eternal nature are spoken, so will the three first forms until the fire as the first principium be taken as the forms to nature, and the fire as a principium and primal condition of life, because there can be no life without fire.

51. This will also be understood of the *spiritus mundi*, he who gave the laws to the children of Israel on Mount Sinai through Moses, and the father of nature, he who in this fiery form is a wrathful, jealous God, and is called a consuming fire.

52. Although God alone is known in the love-fire or light,



and is named, as in the fifth form of eternal nature.

53. Second, the unenlightened heart will still lie like a stone in the way, [separated from] the inward, newborn men of the light-world or the light-principium, because in the aforementioned figure in this chapter the fire-world is in the middle, and a border between the outward temporal and the inner eternal nature.

54. It should be noted that this order of eternal nature of the inward man is as in this figure, and only to be remarked further that this is from the first principium as the fire-root, from inward out, or from below, as from a beginning, and there the first principium is, so they stand in the correct order with one another, as growth, as is visible in this figure.

55. And this is only for the simple, who are weak in conception and easily made tired in seeking, and soon think that everything is in confusion.

56. Now if one's fire-soul breaks through from the light of God, and one places one's outward constellation as its own life, so then is it the fire-red dragon with seven heads; there ride the whores of outward reason's constellation, and strive against the highest in the light-ground, as is set forth in the following second chapter.

57. But when the fire-soul remains in humility and its love-nourishment is kindled for burning, then is it an angel of God, in whom God's majesty and great compassion is revealed, and Sophia's husband and bridegroom, as is put forth in the third chapter, which is the struggle with the fiery dragon of selfhood, battle with which is explained in the fourth chapter, regarding the sword of the spirit; then in the fifth chapter is heralded how one must live like a priest of God in all-holiness, holy, sober, and resigned.



## The Second Chapter

### Preface

1. In the appended figure [on p. 141]], which is the first of our central and illumined author, it is pointed out to the reader what the fall of Adam is, how he has broken himself off from God and from the Yes.
2. There he is become an individual wheel, which now [derives itself] from a wholly strange and false essence, which means lie—that of Satan, the old serpent, who insinuated himself into the first parents in their souls, on which account our beloved savior, who is truth and life to us, named Satan a father of lies [John 8 / 44]—penetrates itself, into good and evil, and reaches only to the outward sun.
3. There the soul is dead inwardly and itself become a hell, in which the eternal curse works and moves:
4. Provided that man in this time (in this life) doesn't turn about and with his heart again come to God.
5. Which penitance means working in the heart, in prayer, penetrating out of the hellish abground with might, to take the heavenly kingdom by violence, and to snatch it with faith.
6. In this understand the rebirth, the faith-spark in the soul's ground is struck and the heart comes into the angst-birth in the fire, in which holy burning the confidence and the trust in God intensifies, and a form in the heart receives Jesus.
7. For faith in Jesus's power breaks through all the might of Satan and all the chains and bonds of wrath and darkness, whereby the souls in all forms of nature have been fastened, instantly destroyed and broken apart, and Satan's yoke through away.
8. Which through dying comes to pass, to which end Jesus planted in us in his death, so that we may die like him, there us with our souls, if they strive in prayer out of all

powers before God, who was himself on a cross-tree.

9. And what the mystery of this death accomplishes in the soul—a new life in Christ arises, in which manifests righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, and out of wrath comes love, as is illustrated in the following figure.

### **Of Natural Men**

1. If the Wisdomloving reader investigates God in his wonders and wants to see him in his hidden Trinity, so he must above all things turn into himself, learn to fundamentally know himself in his inward threefold birth and life, because he is himself God's eternal image and likeness: according to the dark, fire, and light-worlds.

2. And how these three are only one world, but in their essences and workings differentiated, as likewise the threefold life in man, no other can conceive: only one who stands in his own will and fire or spirit.

3. Also each fire has its own center and requires its own nourishment; but it does not take something else in, as is visible in the various different ways of life and drives of people.

4. The outward life, born as a likeness out of the eternal or inward worlds, has its center in the outward heart, stands in flesh and blood, and is in common with all animals, seeking only to breed and multiply.

5. Its nourishment is the constellation with the elements and desire, which the fire in the heart inflates; it has in its wheel the seven forms of the outward nature as planets, which give him wit and reason, govern him and drive him; it has but a temporal beginning and end, and must disintegrate—save the tincture or essence that exists in the fire, which animals do not have.

6. The other is the soul-life out of the inward, eternal fire, which has its center certainly in the heart, but deeper within, and is in the following figure shown in the dark globe or world under the heart. It is the fiery dragon or worldspirit and is with the first life so nearly bound as man



and woman, standing with its root in the *Abgrund*.

7. It has born also seven forms to his conduct, but which only are revealed in anxiety, pride, and high-flying, as is to be seen in devils and unregenerated men: they are the seven seals which the devil pushes before the soul, in order that it not glimpse the holy fire and have enkindled in it the love. [Apoc. 5]

8. Its nourishment is in part out of the essences of the outward body, in part out of the fiery constellation and the elements of the devils, namely pride, avarice, wrath, falsehood, and also all abominations and sins; its spirit is woven from God's wrathspirit, which drives and governs these people.

9. Its seeing in the earthly body is [in] the sunlight, which it uses; but outside the body it sees in a devilish way, like cats, rats, mice, horses, and other animals of the night.

10. In these two lives is man under the outward human form only an animaldevil: he has outwardly a tame or wild animal's quality, and his soul is an abominable worm.

11. Because all self will is a pure devil; and when the outward life is over, so the soul stands in its own will in the dark *Abgrund* with the devil.

12. The third life is the holy lightlife, albeit this is hidden, ineffective and unexperienced in this natural man. His fire is God's love fire, wherein his will burns in the reborn.

13. But this also, resurrected in the heart out of the fire, is a degree deeper than the fire, and the middlemost in man, as can be seen in the following chapter.

14. His nourishment is heavenly being, Christ's flesh and blood, and his power-elements in a new body, namely humble love, gentleness, righteousness, truth, and so forth. His wheel of birth is also in the seven forms spiritually, but in resignation and in humility.

15. His weft, drives, and moving force are the Holy Spirit, born out of heavenly joy; because it gives the soulfire the gentle water of eternal life, cooling it, and making out of anxiety, joy.

16. In the outward, sensual life his tincture-flash resists the poisonous, evil influences of the constellation and the devil, from above and below.

17. These two fires—namely, wrath and love—are eternal, and out of the eternal exhaled in Adam, whence he first stood in a body in a temperature and weight.

18. But because the wrath also wanted to be revealed and the higher-governance had led in Adam, were they split through Adam's allowing the struggle; that was his fall and the separation of the water and light-matrix in a man, and the spoiling of the paradisaical body; in its place he attracted an earthly body with all earthly members in sleep, to which attached sickness and death.

19. Now it should be remarked that Adam feigned in the struggle of this threefold life in all three principles, and desired to taste each in its quality; therefore God imparted him his life, as Christ in Luke 15/12 and 30 makes clear in the text.

20. Now, say the scriptures, all men are generated out of sinful seed and we have our entrance into this world with all animals, and the same exit as well—with the difference that human souls alone are eternal, while animals are not.

21. Hence are we eternal, but these these temporal creatures, whose shadows alone remain: but we should after the completeness of time, stand the trial of eternity, either damnation or eternal joy and gloriousness.

22. Now because we know that God is true and faithful, and cannot lie, so we should open our eyes for once and not live according to the flesh like animals, through which only comes our ruin.

23. Now the scripture reveals to us two fires, a holy, which is kindled from heaven, and a strange fire, which is kindled in the earthly nature in the lower elements through human art and hand.

24. They had to support the priests of the tabernacle and the outward temple with wood; but God didn't want to accept this, and punished them in his wrath, as can be read

in 4 Mos. 16.

25. Which is a beautiful image for the two spiritual fires in us, namely for the love's fire and the wrath fire: one is the supernatural fire of God, which comes out of the inner heaven; the other is the natural fire of the creaturely quality in the body and soul, awakened by the evil lust.

26. And although both were only one fire and were only separated in quality, like a natural fire and the light one sees, so also both were breathed into Adam by God, and were through Adam's earthly desire and false seeking placed in opposition to one another and the holy harmony was rent asunder.

27. And they struggle with each other over governance now in man even in the seed; and whichever receives the upper hand guides the governance in image and form of the creature in the mother's body, as Cain and Abel and Esau and Jacob illustrate.

28. Thus awaken now two kinds of people, good and evil, and not out of a holy predestination, as the reason would have it; for the holy Scripture clearly tells us that God created only One, although He had much spirit and had sought a godly seed. [Mal.2/15; Gen. 1]

29. Also as Adam and Eve took of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and made their body and soul wholly bestial and devilish, had the eternal Word promised a recreation and restoration in *Evae Matricem*, and placed itself in opposition to the devil and life light.

30. Out of which opposition enmity and strife awoke in the seed—Gen. 3—so that now out of one father and mother, children of many natures and qualities, affects and inclinations arose.

31. Now in order to reveal this further to the reader, I want to first point out to him the figure, and the differentiation of the threefold man.

32. In this first figure is the animal body imaged; because the first paradise-body is unknown and ruined. The symbols refer to the manifold earthly fluids [lit.: Säfte, juices]

and forms of the elements, which are revealed in our body.  
 33. From which the gall and the spleen of the concoction in the stomach are caused to mingle, and there, through one or another fluid's overflow or lack, the receptacle [Archäus] is ruined and various sicknesses and infirmities awaken in the body.

34. And we see our great misery, in which stench the life lies imprisoned, and is surrounded by death; we also know not in which instance one or another element will rise in the body and suffocate life, or dry out the moist-root.

35. Thus we boast with animals, adorned with pelts and hair, ornamentation of precious stones, pearls, gold and silver, fattening ourselves with pretty food and forget all too often our poor soul.

36. And if we do indeed gain the highest, and attain an earthly paradise, then death comes, the body goes to the earth and becomes worm food, and the soul enters the hellish, dark fire—which comes upon many unexpectedly and too soon, and without great fear until that moment, as I have noticed by the dying.

37. This earthly man's lifespirt is the air together with the seven forms, earthly and sidereal; his seeing is through sunlight, his center the eternal darkness; and if he does not turn and become reborn, he is imprisoned by the darkness.

38. Because now the great constellative worldspirit with the elements concerns mankind over food and drink and the necessity of breeding, for it wants to have complete power of government over him.

39. Even though God placed the soul as regent in the body and gave it his heavenly Virgin of Wisdom in the lifelight for a helpmeet, so that the soul with the holy Wisdom through the outward spirit—as his instrument—should work and reveal God's wonders in this world: because the wonder of God lies in the firesoul.

40. But the firesoul separated from her dear helpmeet, for it wanted to be its own regent and work and create in this world what it wanted; because she thought that the power



and strength for the wonders lay in her.

41. And that is now in fact Adam's fall: he wanted to go no more with the heavenly Virgin, in obedience to her, but rather, like all animals, have a little woman and satisfy the earthly fruit and lust of the body.

42. So God let him fall to sleep, separated the feminine matrix with the light and water tincture in a woman, and formed him through the *spiritus mundi* into his coarse fleshly body with bestial members, as we still today have, illustrated in this figure.

43. Thus has the outward worldspirit in Adam and Eve the government over the firesoul and this finally through the serpent's lying-speech, and brought to it the earthly lust to eat of the forbidden tree.

44. Thus are we become children of this world and lie imprisoned under the yoke of the worldspirit, who now leads us as his children with his mighty hunger and like the Pharaoh drives the children of Israel unmercifully, so that we hunt after respect, money, luxury, lust, and earthly manifoldness, as if we were to live eternally in this world.

45. Therefore the soul has this unsatisfied avarice-hunger out of the dark *Abgrund*, grounded in this world, and this drives the soul to bestial lewdness, murder, stealing, and all evil, which fruit becomes mixed in the seed, as the first out-birth of Cain shows.

46. Thus has the human enemy sown his weeds among the good seed, which now continues until the final time, when God will collect the good seed in his shed, and the weeds he will bind in bundles and toss into the fire.

47. The fire is very good and cannot be dispensed with; because it gives men warmth and light, so that he can see in darkness, and is for cooking and general working useful and highly necessary.

48. Thus is also God's fire, when it burns in love, useful and good and cannot be dispensed with: for there is the human light, in order to see in the darkness; it helps brings God's wonders to light; there is the light's power and strength,

and brings the wonders out of darkness into being, which is possible for the light alone. It awakens joy, happiness, and jubilation in heaven, while in the darkness it has a painful quality.

49. But if the fire is consumptive, wanting to entangle and negate everything burnable, then is it evil; and where it is not put out, it burns, so long as it has burnable material; finally it dies out and becomes dark coals, ashes, and dust. Thus has God also created water, which can quench the fire.

50. Thus is God's wrathfire evil when it steps out of its proper place in order to destroy love, to be its own fire and wants to engulf all good; and so [if] it is not quenched it engulfs all oily moistness, in order to put out the light, and become the fire of an absolute darkness, as the reader can see in the second figure.

51. The signs of the planets signify the wheel of outward nature as the sidereal body, which wond themselves around until the sun, and the sun is a serpent, meaning the devil in the *spiritus mundi*, which in our earthly life form has slipped in up to the sun.

52. Around the sun is a circle or globe, and this signifies the light-world, which is, however, engulfed or hidden.

53. And the dark globe or sphere under it shows the firesoul or God's wrath.

54. Now if this dark globe or fire-world with the holy love-fire were enkindled, then it burns brightly, and burns forth a bright light in the inner heart, so then the old serpent—Satan—would be thrown into the darkness.

55. And you would be an angelic reborn man and a child of light, who struggles against flesh and blood, devil and world, crucifying unto death your own will with its works and creations, and following Christ in the rebirth.

56. But now you are in such a form only an Antichrist and enemy of the light, and hate the light, because your works are evil. Your own creaturely wrathwill, not that of God, makes you evil and damned; the will can be no more a

spirit with God and walk and live in his commands and footsteps, because the spirit is not obedient to God and not a bridegroom of the heavenly Sophia.

57. But rather it is a self-willed, bestial animal-man, who only looks after its own interest and wants the luxurious fleshly life without cross and revulsion, not heeding Christ nor hungering and thirsting after the heavenly nature, nor does it want to call for powers, help, and assistance.

58. Yes, speaks the creaturely self-will: I can do nothing without Christ; I have no capacity to give anything out of myself; I have nothing to give God, that he might reward me; if he wants to lead me in struggle against myself, so he must protect me with his spirit of prayer, and give me power and ability, in order that I can withstand: because whoever lays his hand to the plough and looks back is not worthy of God's kingdom; I would rather remain in my simplicity, than look after high things, so I will remain peaceable and still; for if I called to the sixth hour, God can call me at the eleventh hour; whoever imposes a cross on himself must carry it; if God wants to lay a cross on me, he knows well enough where to find me.

59. Answer: It is all true, dear soul, and your opinion is quite good; but you only endevil yourself more, covering your conscience with a fig leaf, and thinking that God would not see your selfhood in such darkness. If you didn't know better and God's will weren't revealed to you, you'd want to protect yourself against God's sharp wrathfire.

60. But you know all too well that God the Father doesn't want swineherds, but an all-embracing will that holds in his heart a desire and earnestly in humility goes to God, running to meet him, even if he is still far, clasping, kissing, and holding him.

61. Your own will can rest assured that if it only wants to hold to a desire for God, that God will immediately offer help, and kiss him with his power and protect it; but it loves itself too much, and fears that it will cost it its still,

gentle life in flesh and blood.

62. And if it would break out of the devil's swine-stall, it should find its own natural-law lost, dead, and a strong opposition to the devil, that has besieged him not only from within out of the dark fire-root with doubt, anxiety, unbelief, impatience, and wrath—

63. But rather also outwardly through his wild swine, which invade, whip, scourge, revile, castigate, hate and hold one for a crazy fool, yes as one abandoned by God and men and nailed on the cross and let cry: 'My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?' Where then should one then get bread and relief?

64. With such imaginations the devil holds back most people, although God daily, yea, hourly inwardly calls us inwardly to his repast, the one with his oxen, the other with his acreage, the third with his earthly woman excuses himself and the fourth wants to collect his first relief of many years and thereafter to become pious.

65. But God will not accept such self-willed ones; he is only a counterstriving, dark devil in human form, who belongs in hell and not heaven.

66. Now man wants, because he is still stuck in flesh and blood, not to break through the anxiousfire of God's wrath and burns up in his selfhood, so he must after the laying off of the earthly shell, go where it is not so gentle. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!

67. God has given man free will with the seven forms through the outflow of the eternal Trinity and breath of holy Wisdom, and gave him reason or understanding with the five senses as outward helps, which is called the heart [Gemüt], so that he may with free will be master in all creation and should reveal the wonders of God—

68. But now to the end that he turn inward and be obedient to his Maker, and in humility should stand in the holy lightground, which with him and through him works and wants to reveal; he should eat of the *verbum domini* as of Christ's flesh and blood of the inward man in faith, not of



the earthly fruit of the outward flesh-body out of the maggot-sack.

69. So has this free will separated itself from the inner lightground in you, made itself into its own God, and now with its forms of outward nature lords it over understanding and sense, rides on the soul, strives against God in the inward ground, does what it wants, and embraces the body, and is a pure devil, a fiery dragon, and a serpent, which God now with his strong wrathmight must battle, bind, and bow, crush, and toss out.

70. Even though God through his Holy Spirit wants to come to the aid inwardly of the poor, imprisoned soul, and strike the lovefire in it, in order that it might want to come to a bright view [of the fire], and might could glimpse its own will as an abominable dragonform—

71. This self-will through its false desire of the flesh after lust, lewdness, respect, richness, and the good life and foolish joy, has let so much moisture into the soul's fire that it is stuck and cannot burn in God's love.

72. God then calls him through his reborn children and apprentices to repentance and turn about and calls him to the presence of the Lord, so the self will excuses itself, for it wouldn't be his gift; he'd have received another gift, wherein God's wonders could work:

73. All members of a body would be not one member that has many functions, but rather many, which each performs its own business of the body; it would be like a house with many timbers and beams, each of which serving to carry a different load.

74. But he hides himself thus in himself and closes the door of the heart to the holy voice, because he doesn't want to be disturbed in his fleshly peace and governance.

75. Now who wants to punish and persuade this beautiful self-God? Because he's stuck in a bestial animal in larval human form, outwardly pious, noble, and God-serving, goes to church and mass, pays for the care of teachers and the poor, he praises himself as a baptized Christian, and

hopes to be seen as holy or, out of grace to become holy.

76. He knows the Scripture like a teacher, and he even goes so far as to decry the outward church, which has fallen into decay, and with righteous, earnest scholars of Christ's knowledge, investigates the hidden life and their language, even outwardly abstaining from his woman or remaining unmarried, and speaking of Sophia's chaste marriage-bed and of marriage with the faithful soul.

77. But he is only an animal rising out of the *Abgrund* of darkness, which speaks as a Lamb and is only an ape of holy Wisdom, who mocks God, his children, and all righteous beings.

78. He makes the sign of Jesus + on his constellation and is only a charlatan and speaking mouth, no true acting Christ, whose humble, serene will leads to act, who places himself in Christ's essential process and poverty, which is for the true Christian the sign of knowledge and proofstone, heartfully, indeed loved more than all the treasures of Egypt.

79. I certainly feel well the devil's opposition in my creaturely selfhood, for he is gladly hidden in man and doesn't want to be revealed; but I let open what no one can close.

80. Because the selfwill loves itself so much and makes men so purblind that they don't recognize God's love any more and can't differentiate it from their own love; and it thinks that if one handles one's own will only with a word that God would hold one in the apple of his eye, and would gladly, if he only could, send fire from heaven, to obliterate this enemy.

81. But your self will is not of God's prophet Elias, who was subject to the spirit of God, but rather only a self-will of the devil, who wants to place himself in your lifelight as in God's temple, and reign over all that is God's, meaning that he wishes to be God.

82. The blind reason wants to speak the word of its own will, and says: if all men trod in Christ's footsteps, and were to follow after him completely, the world couldn't

stand it, because all nourishment would be at a standstill.

83. But listen, dear reason: six hundred thousand men, not counting women and children, went out of Egypt, and did not go without food; the first Christians sold their acreage, gave everything to the community, and Jerusalem continued to stand.

84. The self-will will say that it possesses what it should not possess; and if God tosses riches his way, he should not lock it in a box and say: this is the good of me and my children; I want to live and do what I want and understand, and my children should inherit such riches.

85. But rather he should say: Lord, this is yours and for your poor children's good, so I offer it to you. And he should not grudge the poor members of Christ the crumbs under the table, and against them let his little brooklet flow out: So could the poor in his spiritual holy service and prayer come unhindered, and earnestly go forth and bless you, his mild benefactor.

86. And it is in no way Christ's and his children's teaching and life to impoverish the rich, to bring to a standstill handwork and nourishment, and bring the world to a halt, but rather you are a blind reason-teacher and ruin yourself, in that you twist the clear letters of Christ's teaching to your own convenient self will,—

87. And teach that one can serve two masters, gather worries and treasures, whereby you bury like thieves, make yourself a great repast, gather riches, claim that one should give nothing to the poor, so that he in his laziness and phantasy is not strengthened, and closes up the little well Abraham has dug.

88. Whereby the selfwill stiffens in its selfhood, you're drawn to and feed on the fat of the earth, you despise the poor and spit at them as lazybones.

89. Which hinders the poor members of Christ in their race and struggle against God's wrath, so that they must cry to God for help and rescue.

90. Whereby God's righteousness is often excited, so that

an enemy is awakened in you and your supposed blessing is transformed into a curse, so that you must have many thousands of soldiers to protect your Mammon, and the enemy doesn't give in if everything isn't taken away from you, and you are made into a poor Christian and follower of Christ.

91. The rich of this world are commanded not to be proud, and not to hope in their uncertain riches, but rather in the living God, who commands us to become rich in doing good, to give gladly, be helpful, and to gather these treasures to themselves as good ground for the future, so that they may inherit eternal life, as Paul teaches in 1 Tim. 6.

92. The blessing of God makes rich without work through rich gifts; because for a rich giver God has love and promised that he shall recompense a cold drink of water.

93. Which Christ in his depiction of the future judgement [Matthew 25] also teaches, that he will have his poor to the right and the rich to the left, and say: he is hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, and in prison, and what one did or did not do to his poor members, happened or did not happen with him, and he will recompense each according to his works.

94. Now against this the reason says that if the rich had to care for all the poor, they themselves would end up poor, and unable to give more. This Tauler answered in his poor life: if the rich go so far as to become poor by giving, they stand in Christ's poverty, and he will care for them again, so that they will be given relief.

95. But my answer is that reason is blind, and it isn't acquainted with Christ's poverty nor knows to differentiate it from the poverty of the world. For Christ's poor are the faithful Christians, who are poor only out of love for their head Christ and hold their own poverty higher than all the world's riches.

96. And if you wanted to give all your Mammon to a faithful Christian, he wouldn't take it, because his is a complete renunciation of all earthly goods, and he is blessedly poor, but rich in God, with which someone poor in the



world isn't acquainted.

97. A believer doesn't make himself poor, but rather the world persecutes him, takes all away from him, and leaves him nothing, bans him from his own land, and brings him thus into real authentic poverty of Christ, so that he can neither buy nor sell in the world.

98. And so we are in this way forced, although gladly and willingly, to become Christ's disciples, and must seek God's kingdom in full confidence that God will provide clothing and relief.

99. In which faith he must also persevere without looking back, or it will take his faith from him, and he will have to beg and be a slave of the world and the belly.

100. Now if God didn't care for his faithful children, so he would be worse than a heathen, yea, worse than a wild animal, which cares for its young.

101. But an unbelieving, worldly poor one who has come into poverty through misfortune or punishment, is afflicted by his need for daily bread; if he has it, that satisfies him, and he sees himself as fortunate enough; but of God he knows nothing.

102. A faithful Christ[ian] keeps God's command and does not desire his neighbor's goods, nor speaks to him when in need of help; and if he does something then through reason, he receives nothing.

103. Because God wants to have the honor alone so that one should pray to him; so he will he guide a Habakkuk by the hair to Daniel in the lion's den, or send an angelic mild man, who must care for the poor of Christ.

104. An unbelieving worldly poor one is certainly passed over by the rich and is annoying to them; because he has nothing to hope for from the poor, and the rich do not willingly give much away because they think that in this way they will only make the poor rich too.

105. A faithful Christ curses all trust in men, indeed, in his own hands; because God has cursed it. To this point an unbelieving worldly one can't come, because he has not

other God than the rich of this world.

106. A believing poor Christ is an annointed priest of God and temple of the Holy Spirit in which God dwells; his work is to pray unceasingly, so that all may go well for him in the land in which he dwells, and for all people, so that through the Holy Spirit's outpouring all may be brought to knowledge of the truth.

107. He must stand in his brother's stead in distress, and help him struggle, battle, and overcome; but he cannot serve two masters or bring himself to trade for food; because he is unsuitable for all outward works.

108. Hence he must always live soberly and moderately and always diligently attend to the movement of the Holy Spirit in the heart, so that he hears the Lord speak in him: An unbelieving worldly poor one only troubles after the things of this world.

109. Where then are these faithful poor Christians? asks the reason. I would certainly like to see one.—I confess that they grow up very thin, and can be easily counted on one's fingers.

110. It would certainly not be necessary that you, poor, blind reason-teacher, admonish your rich hearers to hold onto their sack, close their hands, and starve clinging to this little heap.

111. I hope also that God might not reckon your blindness against you, that you seek to persecute and hunt down others; because you are created to breathe prayer and practice our faith, love, hope, and patience.

112. But will you see that you must also drink with the communion cup from which we drink, and that you are baptised with the same baptism, and also will baptise. Outwardly are we all lamentably too human, and fragile; but the inward man is saved in God, which remains hidden from all reason.

113. On which account I had resolved wholly to give [these secrets] to no one, because I, knowing all too well that reason is the regent of this world, and knows how to mas-

ter all clever things, was fearful and well saw what a war such people would awaken.

114. But I have had revealed the spirit of God, and my way and my life against my will to a good friend in prayer, and to him they were commended.

115. I have the highest to thank for my life, which I have placed in Christ, out of death's revenge and hell, wonderfully plucked out against all human hope, and I wasn't defeated in this fiery war with God and man.

116. Only it is painful that out of thirty [companions] not more than one stood fast in his will and held to Jesus in faith, for which we can praise alone the almightiness of the love of God.

117. Reason speaks: if you speak of such a high apostolic life, why don't you go out into the world and preach the Evangelium, but rather sit still in some nook and not make profit with God?

118. Yes, dear reason, you have put it well; you would be the first to deny if we were to preach discipleship to you and should say: *Leave your nest and follow us!*

119. We have no command to go out, but rather to go in; there are we called, and must in our will stand still for our maker, to see what he wants to do with and through our will as his instrument.

120. Our wellmeaning trotting and running does nothing and works only in reverse, against God's will. A still, calm will is to God more useful and agreeable than a self-working will.

121. We want to will ourselves and alone what God wants, and therefore we let the reason rule over us and discriminate what it wants; because we know that it is blind in holy things.

122. Now we know that God is good and everything that he made is good, and can in no way hold it against God that we are become evil and withdrawn our breathed-in holy free will from him, the maker, and made it isolated—

123. So it is become now a pure devil, which in Daniel and

John is compared to abominable, rapacious animals, a gruesome dragon, poisonous serpents and other vermin; and God's spirit does not come out of hate, envy, or bitterness:

124. But rather out of a heartfelt love is opened, so that we poor Eve-children may learn to glimpse and recognize, and see the hate, disgust, and fear battling over us, and to turn back with the lost son and again to think of our heavenly Father's house.

125. Because if one also ascends into God's love and wants to place all Godless, damned souls near the devils in heaven, I don't want to dispute it, but such depends not on God's allmight nor on our will, but rather on the damned souls' and devils' wills, whether they can hold in eternity a will to humility and be saved out of the wrathfire of God.<sup>20</sup>

126. Which subject I don't come gladly to, because I believe that everything that is eternal can undergo no more change. I write not of that which remains hanging by a thread and through the magical wrathfire must go through unspeakable pain:

127. But rather of those for whom no advocate and no alleviation in the fire is to be hoped for: they will deny, curse, and flee God. Good intentions and selfwill will find no place in God's tribunal, but rather each must be satisfied with God's judgement, since God is righteous and true.

128. And if one, out of I Peter 3/19, wants to draw a conclusion, that there is a salvation out of hell (because Christ had preached to the spirits in prison), I would remark that there are spirits in this prison between time and eternity, and also those in the hell of the devil, but I have found a great difference between them.

129. Because in the prison between time and eternity is no angst-source, also neither darkness nor light, but rather a twilight. But in hell is certainly bewilderment and dreadful angst-source, to which the soul is constrained through its refusal of God.

130. Because my remaining therein lasted only six hours,



and if God had not held my tongue, I would have immediately renounced him in eternity.

131. I should also not conceal how God has permitted me to learn from the dying of great sinners, who sought me ought, that Christ pursues the soul until the separation of body and soul.

132. And if the soul comes to the goal of the eighth fire-form, wherein Moses stands with his fiery law and the devil holds before the soul the sin-register, is Christ a mediator, a mercy-seat and an advocate for the soul, so that it still enjoys a glimpse of grace and hope remains hanging by a thread.

133. But I would like to advise no one to therefore trust in sinning; because where the wrath of God is too highly amassed, there it burns unspeakably sharply, as is to be seen in a natural fire: the more wood and oil one piles on, the more sharply it burns. Be warned therefore.

134. If one only observes how all religions in the world have sharpened their understanding in order to give this animal-devil a gentle way to paradise without the dying to selfhood and leading to discipleship of Christ in the glory of God, so one sees the three principles' struggle over governance in the soul, as they are always struggling with one another and have placed themselves near one another.

135. Thereby originates the natural man's blindness and great egoism, in which he believes that his teaching and opinion must be God's guidance, by which he should direct himself, and not by God's word and command.

136. Here nothing is spoken of the heathen who have heard nothing of Christ, and whose opinion still to this hour resists the Christians, for each lives according to his opinion, dies and thinks that he is like Christ to sit at the right hand of God and glorify him forever, but without the rebirth and dying to selfhood in heaven, for they are led and instructed by blind teachers.

137. Now because the great God laments our human misery, he has out of his grace through a simple unlearned

layman, Jakob Böhme, unveiled the deep ground of the three principles as the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil and the original fall of Lucifer and Adam.

138. This knowledge has enkindled courage in many to dig further after this little pearl in oneself, so that here one, and there another has found a little vein, which has driven or led them to the love of God and prayer.

139. His writings came into my hands in the first few years of my awakening, and were of very great use to me in my first struggle.

140. And it is no great wonder that one in the early church began with great eagerness as a follower of Christ, but quickly fell away and fell again from the renunciation of all earthly good into selfish convenience.

141. And I cannot thank God enough that he has led me, among all the unworthiest, to the poverty of Christ and has opened his own hiddenness through praxis, even if it is despised by all people, which comes to pass out of the rightly-created fiery love of Christ Jesus.

142. We should love him above all as our head, king, and throne-prince, yea, our eternal bridegroom, represented uniformly in all of us; because where no uniformity is, can be no unity and harmony.

143. Now it is known to us out of the holy Scripture as also in the light of nature that externalized his free will of the creater in the spirit of this world and desired this world's treasures, and so all his children were brought with him into such false quests and desires and have made themselves slaves of the world and children of darkness,—

144. So we are brought to earn our bread by the sweat of our brow and lead our life in toil, angst, need, worry and care, and finally we must go out of this world into eternal darkness and remain children of hell.

145. We should therefore turn around and put on Jesus, who has come here to help us in our humanity from his heavenly father, turn our creaturely will out of all earthly temptation and desire, again to his and our heavenly father,

he who has subjected himself unto death of the cross in obedience,—

146. And also has taught us that when we want to be his, we should likewise renounce all earthly will, take up our cross and follow him, which teaching is found not only among the apostles, but among all Christians in common.

147. On which account the first Christians have testified to and practiced this commandment, so that they had the love of Christ and kept his commands.

148. Now the whole teaching of Christ is summed up: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. No one can serve two masters; he will depend on one and leave the other. See the birds of heaven: they sow and reap not; your heavenly father cares for them.

149. First pay attention to the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and everything else will follow for you. Do not worry; your heavenly father cares for you. See treasures that remain eternally, and so forth.

150. Such a life of faith is today all too strange, as strange as faith itself; this I know well. That we are but heathenish unbelievers is true; in the meantime, we don't raise our unbelief to God's faith.

151. Hence was I fearful of becoming known, because I well foresaw that the poverty of Christ would awaken mighty struggle and opposition, would judge all other worldly ways of life and throw them to the floor; on which account each would want to strike and rub against this stone; each says: who can live this way?

152. And they condemn the poverty of Christ and its lovers as the worst of all seducers, who should be in the world, who would be noxious and insufferable in all well-ordered republics; the bell was already cast, but lacked a clapper.

153. Such a storm we've seen not a little of, and met with prayer, because the devil means to wholly cook our goose.

154. Reason may now turn to our writing and make whatever strange understanding it wishes, but so stands nonetheless the life of Christ and teaching against the natural

Adamic life, and it is impossible for one to be a truly reborn Christ who possesses something in his own will.

155. Because in possession the selfhood intrudes, which Adam attracted; it must be wholly renounced or be thrown into hell, where it belongs—since Christ himself lived in the world on alms, and didn't have so much as a place where he could lay his head.

156. Now reason will bring forth [this objection]: If all men should become faithful poor, who should then support them? Listen then to reason: Christ's teaching doesn't take away the injustice of Mammon, nor abolish right use: because it is a gift of God, whereby the rich should flourish.

157. Christ called the householder and rentmaster, so that they should in the right time give relief to his faithful poor disciples; they desire nothing more.

158. And whoever says it is his good, and belongs to him, he's a thief of God, who steals it, and he will have to give up a reckoning for it. God has created everything in common, for general use, not for luxury, debauchery, and lust.

159. And when these rich ones who have closed God's riches in their chests and kept it for their own, but have not given the faithful Christians their relief in the right time, must hear with horror: *"Away from me you cursed ones, into the eternal fire which is prepared for you and all devils!"*

160. As long as a believer holds goods on his own, he cannot trust in God with his whole heart, and is also not able to break through to a fast, living, faith-power, nor be freed from the governance of the worldspirit, which though it is to the rich a paradox, is perfectly well understood by the poor faithful.

161. The poverty of Christ is Wisdom's fortress, wherein she dwells; whoever wants to go there must become poor. The poverty of Christ is the hidden treasure of all kingdoms, all powers, knowledge, and mystery of God. A fool despises it, but the wise hold it in highest esteem. All earthly Mammon is against it only reckoned as crud.

162. I speak without vanity of truth, as the Lord is my



witness: If you wanted to give me the whole world's good in exchange for Christ's poverty, I wouldn't hesitate an instant to make the exchange: it preserves from arrogance and haughtiness, and is a fire of God that awakens and drives to love and prayer.

163. God is so strongly bound to the poor that he cannot let them go: angel, man, and raven must serve him. God doesn't permit them to beg like the unbelieving worldly poor must beg of the worldspirit, which often kicks them away like a dog.

164. God always awakens good-working hearts, who care for the faithful. One cannot always recognize the Christ-poor from without, because they may outwardly appear rich and thereby remain hidden from all reason.

165. People are ashamed of the poverty of Christ and despise it as humiliation, but the Lord is also ashamed in them before the heavenly Father.

166. I have at no time sought the money of the rich nor bowed before his Mammon, but rather have frankly testified to the truth and decried what is wrong, and I have been better loved by the rich than I was worth.

167. Had I lived in the world and served the *Spiritus Mundi*, I would have to do what it wanted; but God's grace has inwardly held me and I have attacked and punished the life under the worldspirit, while it has cut me off from my nourishment, indeed from everything, not leaving me a good shirt, and intended that I should bow at his feet.

168. And he has lost his mastery; because he has to serve me through God's holy will and must richly provide for my relief; and as he noticed his loss, he rose up violently against me, and he piped his sweet melodies, but, through God's grace, he could not lure me into his Venus-heaven.

169. Therefore he is mightily enraged and has marshalled all his powers against me, hungering after the poverty of Christ, but God has wisely frustrated him: to whom be alone eternally praise, thanks, might, kingdom, strength, and power. Amen!



## Third Chapter

### Preface

1. In the appended figure, which is our author's second [on p. 142], appears a form of the faithful through the forms of outward nature—wherein the three forms of the *centri naturae* eternal as the dark world may be understood—until the midpoint in the heart.

2. Jesus appears there in the heart, breaks the dark bearing-mother, and is born in us, take his kingdom in our heart, and as God's promised serpent-treader, whose dawn and future is in us now and forever, comes forth with the holy lightbirth and thwarts and crushes Satan, that old serpent, without stopping at the head, grasps and throws the poisonous serpentanimal into the *Abgrund*.

3. Where a new world opens in the will and the lost son, the soul, comes again to the Father and is taken into God's heart as into the inward holy light-tincture, where he is clothed again by Jesus with clothes or love, the first garments of innocence [Luke 15/22].

4. Which Satan envies in him—you—as he did the first parents in paradise, and kindles continually God's wrathfire in the forms of nature in darkness, inwardly and outwardly, tempting the soul in the fireform, which it now must withstand in faith.

5. Which is a long-wearying struggle, so that love and wrath battle against one another, in which wrath must reveal the love: it goes through all ten forms of the inner firelife until the Almighty, where Love alone is revealed to be God and almighty, [whereas] the wrath is only nature, which must be incorporated into the strength and might of love, so that both will become one essence and being.

6. In this being is this whole Godhead in spirit and it embraces in itself God the Father and Son in newborn humanity, in which the Father delivers the Son over to humanity, and imprints him in the heart and marries Jesus

in the Virgin, his Wisdom; where Satan earlier fell like lightning from heaven to earth and was thrown out, but we in our struggles overcome.

### **On Reborn Man**

1. The fortunate reader should know that I write not out of opinion and books, but rather out of a vision and experience and find great difficulty, because this man is spiritual and very hidden, and cannot be copied in naturalistic figures nor described by the tongue.
2. But I must offer this natural likeness. This the loving reader himself must look after, until he has experienced understanding.
3. And if he therefore wants to know the light of the holy Wisdom itself, so he must turn into his inwardmost ground or center of the soul with fiery earnestness, diligently pray, call upon God's Holy Spirit, and give all that he is, and has, in body, soul, and spirit, faithfully fasten his earnest intention, so that nothing—poverty, cross, need, nor death should move him, but rather he should follow Him steadfastly to the end, as I have myself done.
4. So do not doubt, God will hear your prayer in the name of Jesus and give you what your heart longs for and desires.
5. The new body is so wholly different from the old as the bright-shining sun is different from the earth's darkness; and if you stay with the old body, then this will be inconceivable, but in time you will certainly see.
6. And it cannot be well represented as with the light of the sun and stars; it is as impossible to look on it with our outward, natural eyes as it is impossible to looking in the brilliance of the sun with natural eyes.
7. And although one may cite Christ's appearance after his resurrection, it is important to observe that he was not yet transfigured.
8. In the history of Paul in Damascus it clearly says that Paul was blinded by the beaming glorified body of Christ



and for three days his natural vision was blinded—not to mention my own experience.

9. Now as the light of the sun is related to the light of the stars, so are we related in our new body to the body of Christ: he is the sun, we the stars, one flesh and one limb, one essence; the nearer and more like Christ's suffering and discipleship, the brighter the light and glow.

10. The powers of this body I cannot compare with the colors of the bright-glowing precious stones, diamonds, rubies, hyacinths, jasper, and so forth.

11. Which interplaying colors yield such a lovely and glorious glimpse that the angels themselves would long to look on it, and human tongues cannot express it; because we have only earthly likenesses that are only a shadow of the heavenly being.

12. Ah, how foolish is mankind, who forfeit for a handful of fleeting, fleshly lust, such eternal gloriousness.

13. This body eats of the word of God or the heavenly Sophia, which shines out of the inner holy lovefire and light in the body, and the desire or belief makes it essential, conceivable; and it is only spiritual, subtler than the air, like the sunbeams, which penetrate through all corpora [bodies].

14. This heavenly being of the new spiritual body draws the transmuted soul again through its strong desire into its fiery essence like the bridegroom to the bride, and is borne out of a high, triumphant, bright, white light, in the innermost heart and the soul in the light-world.

15. Thereout goes the Holy Spirit in the eternal Wisdom and helps also in the outward life to bring forth, form, and create its earthly bread and relief.

16. And this is now the holy and eternal bearing-forth of the three principles as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and Wisdom in reborn men, but not only bread, like the poor, blind reason thinks, and it should rightly remain blind to this deep mystery, because it is not worthy to know and understand it.

17. Because you seek only this world, to fill your caskets and chests, and leave the overflow to your children. Seek a religious soul, that would be much better.

18. The pious rich also are blind here, if they have a good knowledge, in that they want to further help their fleshly worldly friends, empower them in their evil and laziness, and the devil feeds on their selfishness.

19. They have to expect praise and thanks neither from their godless friends nor from God, and such anxious strugglers in the painful birth begrudge to let fall a bit of bread from their table, which will shame them before God.

20. Because man will not be judged by his good opinion, but according to God in his open science, as the Lord himself has revealed [Luke 12/47 and Jak. 4/17].

21. And I hope that such goodhearted brotherly advice will not be construed as evil; because we must let our light shine, without regard for person, and let God have the judgement.

22. Know that God has given one a free will wherein God himself wants to will, form, and create what pleases him, lovingly and in a friendly manner to reveal himself; but the self-will hates him, and if it does many good works, it does them only in selfishness.

23. The illuminated and experienced reader has no need of our writings; because he has his own inward teacher and leader in himself; and we have not written to him.

24. But to the inexperienced and unpracticed heart we should let shine our light and show what the rebirth is, what God has for a process with the old Adam, and how the new man of a degree must step forward to change, until his new body has attained complete awakening.

25. And it must be remarked that we in the rebirth do not receive a new soul, but a new body, thus the soul has no need of being reborn, but rather only a renewal and transmutation out of the outward into the inward, where will be renewed with the pure Godhead.

26. The old maggot-sack is and remains fragile and acts

with its anxious hunger and drives rather like the manure on the open field for the growth of the seed.

27. It devours the soul of all its provisions, brings it into poverty, anxiety, care, and grief, so that it has no delight or joy nor satisfaction in the outward swinish life, becomes sad, observes the futility of earthly life, sees the vanity in all things, and begins to think of its Father's house.

28. And if this anxious driver were not there, would God's wonder of Wisdom not be brought to light, nor could the faithful's prayer earnestly and fierily be kindled.

29. To which aim Christ led his disciples into holy poverty, so that they forsook all earthly means, were banned and persecuted, had so little means that they had nowhere to lay their heads, so they had to have faith that God had promised to care for them.

30. Because poverty and need teach you to call upon and cry to God to strengthen your faith, which the students of Christ best understand.

31. And if one can find no faith among the rich, this is the truth, which they themselves would testify, if they one day were robbed of their stash, where unbelief, doubt, care, anxiety, and concern immediately would slip into their heart, and they would call: "Whence comes my bread here in the wilderness?" as we see by Moses himself [4 Mos. 11/13]."

32. We poor men don't know how deeply we are bound by the *spiritus mundi*, and live in clear unbelief, often imagining ourselves strongly faithful, yet not trusting God for a piece of bread, fearing this loss when we are taught to fear, to love, and to trust God above everything, so that we would tempt God.

33. I have felt my weakness enough and experienced struggling until after much practice the little weak faith-seed became a strong tree, which can stand against all the stormwinds of the devil and the reason.

34. Now if the soul turns itself about in the body, so it turns its back to the sunlight and turns its face to God in

the inner light-world and seeks another seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling, when it also stands in the darkness.

35. And it now for the first time knows that it has abandoned God and left its Father's eternal house, has wasted its precious love-life with whores; it falls to its knees, humbles itself before the heavenly Father, who dwells in the hidden light, and wants to begin to pray in the spirit; but it cannot, because it has only learned to pray out of books, and doesn't understand the true prayer in spirit and in truth.

36. There it will encounter the Holy Spirit with a great sensitive movement in the heart, as is shown in this figure with the dove, which movement of the soul is unfamiliar, strange, because it still doesn't know God and on this account is astonished and seeks after the movement,—

37. Which the devil notices, and slips outwardly into the heart and seeks to fluster the soul with false bafflings, as if it came from him, seeking to make the heart doubtful, as it also happened to me, in which the devil speaks in the heart: *Now I have possessed you, you are mine!*

38. Which terrified my soul, so that I rose up from prayer and, in order to drive out these evil thoughts, grasped the New Testament and read therein.

39. And as it happened, my eye fell upon the words of Paul in I. Cor. 6/19: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which you have from God, and that you do not belong to yourself?"

40. Which words brought me to the deepest astonishment, because I had from my youth sought God outside myself, spent many half days wandering sadly in the fields, or hidden in a vale, called upon heaven and longed like Moses, David, and other men of the Bible to speak with God.

41. But God did not want to appear to me, and so I had to sadly return home. There I then held my prayerbooks, opened the window or sat under the open heavens, so that



my reading might rise unhindered to heaven: And I went blindly thus to twentysix years of age.

42. I have therefore laid down my New Testament, again fell to my knees, and thanked God for his gracious appearance, which flows forth so richly that I in five hours have been able to attain no end, and am astonished over this rich blessing.

43. I have also bound my heart with Christ and have wholly given myself over to him in body, soul, and spirit, everything to the cross, so as to please him, willingly bearing the cross with its conditions, so that he should not have to go alone, because I am an unintelligent child who could not distinguish between right and left.

44. Which my most beloved help received in a friendly and loverich manner, and gave me a full cup to drink, which was sweet in the mouth, but uncommonly bitter in the body.

45. But he never more left me alone, rather rescued me truly from all temptation, suffering, poverty, persecution, and grief. To him be eternal reverence, praise, and thanks!

46. I was also immediately illuminated with holy knowledge and was stricken in the heart to punish the evil life and pointed out to the priests, which raised an alarmbell, and labelled me as heretic, enthusiast, phantast, anabaptist, and so forth.

47. They mocked, insulted, and humiliated me, led me over the streets and wanted to force my head down, but because they could not ultimately agree, they finally took everything away from me and banned me eternally from the city.

48. So now I lay in a stinking hole, locked up, tempted by the devil and tested by gruesome doubts, so much so that I grasped a knife and would have, in order to save my anxious life from suffering, brought my life with a stab to a quick end.

49. He brought me into such fiery wrestling and struggling that my flesh was worn away from my knees but I felt no

outward pain due to the inward soul-angst; because the devil made all prayer doubtful to me.

50. Now as I wandered in such anguish in prison and sang Lutheran Psalms: "Were God not with us in this time" and so forth, was I suddenly translated in the spirit and fell to earth.

51. Then I saw in the heart a bright white light, around the heart a thick serpent, three times around like a chain wound; and in the midst of the serpent appeared Jesus in a bright light in the form he is described in John's Apoc. I/ 13-15.

52. He spoke with a deep sigh: *If your mercy were not my trust, O God, I would have to disappear in my desolation.*

53. Hardly had these words been spoken to their end when the serpent was crushed with a mighty movement, and was so cut up that I saw its innumerable pieces fall down into the dark bowels.

54. Then I came to myself again and felt such remarkable freedom and faithpower in prayer, as is imaged in this figure.

55. This expulsion from the Egyptian servinghouse is the first beginning and entrance into the testing-wilderness of the unbelieving reason, which is not satisfied with the poverty of Christ; it is ashamed to beg, cannot bury itself, and thinks of fleshly things, of cabbage, onions, and garlic of the Egyptians: and the devil awakens unbelief, doubt, and mistrust.

56. Reason wants to see, and the faith in the heart is still but a mustard seed, that cannot withstand a stormwind. There is snarling and growling and the soul must sigh mightily.

57. In which condition God sends the soul wonderful rescue, if man will only pray, as I have well experienced through God's grace, but which is too much to describe.

58. But I will warn the desirous reader of two great temptations, into which I in my time saw many stumble and fall into.

59. The first temptation is: when the soul is expelled out of the Egyptian servitude through the spirit of this world and is placed in Christ's poverty, so that it works in God's vineyard, placing its earthly hunger in God's promises, also it should with its true helpmeet and soul's bridegroom Jesus imagine, form, and create through its faith desire, prayer, and imploring its relief in the inward heaven, whereby it essentially is cast to earth and sent to wellmeaning, pious hearts:

60. If it again in earthly reason turns back to Egypt, hungers after earthly bread, and does what it pleases as if it were holy divine will and not a devilish temptation gripping it, doesn't pray diligently, or stand always in fear of the tempter, having Christ's footsteps always sharply in mind.

61. Whereby many upright hearts are burdened, complain and sigh: Ah, if I had not married him! Ah, if I had held fast!—what nevertheless certainly is not to change.

62. Then the heavenly Virgin closes herself in her center, and lets the soul vainly wait outside and knock.

63. And although the reason has had a glimpse of the holy light, so that it sharply conceives God's mystery and the mouth can prattle of it, the imaging, forming, and creating power is gone and only a clay cask is left.

64. The devil hungers after God's love; but see that he doesn't devour you and possess your house, sweeping you out, which he has a great desire to do.

65. And where he comes in again, he takes seven spirits with him, that are more violent than he, and rule your soul and your heart in the seven forms of nature, so that you won't so easily this time fight them and through them out. Hold what you have: Need is a bad guest to suffer.

66. The other temptation is still worse and more damnable: if the soul burns brightly with God's fire and bears forth a beautiful light, wherein the heavenly Virgin goes forth triumphantly in the heart and her dear bridegroom kisses in the fire soul with light rays, and reveals its powers and

God's wonders, and one forms a strong desire for God's powers and wonder, and appears with a heartfelt praise-song in heaven:

67. Where it out of humility and serenity goes out and in its own love and convenience, in which it thinks that this is its own soul's fire-might and such wonders come through its own fiery magic and prayer, and can be revealed and worked by it, so it flights high over its throne, wants to be something, and makes itself into an arrogant self-willed devil, who under the appearance of holy righteousness wants everything to bow under its feet, to ride everything; and whatever doesn't swiftly bow, it persecutes with fire and sword and curses and damns to hell—

68. So that the precious Virgin is very grieved thereby, and removes herself, for she can come no longer with loving help to her bridegroom.

69. Because when she wants to bring her sweet light-rays into the soul's fire and gentle it, it only makes the soul fierier, more arrogant and uppity, so that it stands against all the powers of the gentle light and lets nothing into itself, because it wants to take and break her sharpness.

70. It takes all gentleness for dissimulation and throws out everything that is not fiery, which one covers up with the *mysterium stultitiae* [mystery of folly] and calls it God's righteousness and law; and is indeed under such cover only a proud, high-flying devil.

71. When the precious Virgin Sophia sees that she cannot rescue her beloved bridegroom with love or gentleness of heart, so she retires to her light-principium, [which] makes the soulfire dark and lets it fall into sin and folly, gives it an unsteady, foolish woman [around] the neck, so that the great firebrand is quelched with earthly water, gives the fiery spirit to play in his phantasy.

72. I have been also awakened and kindled by such a firespirit; because I was still unpracticed and didn't know the devil, but rather held him for holy and thought that I should bow like an inexperienced soldier under his direc-



tion and ought to obey his word.

73. But the beloved God had seen my simplemindedness with compassion and corrected me; for which I remain eternally thankful.

74. May the goodhearted reader be truly warned: because it is much better [to suffer] out of another's injury than [to act] out of his own cleverness.

75. It can certainly not be borne forth without fire either great or small, alike in the outward or inner nature. Also it is true that there, where a great fire is, is a great light, which is very good and useful, if only it burns in humility and not stepping out of its order in order to eat itself, wanting to kindle and consume everything.

76. If Lucifer in heaven and Adam in paradise had recognized such truth, so would one be an angel and the other remained a paradisaical man.



## The Fourth Chapter

### Foreword

1. Here follows in order the third and fourth figures of our author [on pp. 143-144], which one can place at the beginning and as the title-illustration of all the writing of the author, because it is the first image of God out of the rebirth in Christ in his completion: with the pectorale or priestly breast-shield of both eternal principles in Urim and Thummim, light and completedness of the spirit, as also with the humorale and kingly cloak of the kingdom of Jesus over the outward principium.

2. Hence a reader soon may notice and remark in the beginning how the author in all his letters aims to toil outwardly with Paul so that every man may be completed in this image.

3. It is the aim in which stands the center in new men in their first holy order; the first and second principiums first, the third behind in the heart.

4. All three resurrect in the heart and work in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, separated from one another, so that the fire-world works below, the light-world above.

5. The air-world at the back is an outbirth of the two first, so it receives both in its mirror of the powers and illuminates them, when the king of the nobles in his majesty appears and manifests, there is a glimpse like a bright precious stone, whereby the heavenly Jerusalem of Apoc. 21 is understood. All powers stand and work as one power in one another and play with their many virtues and light through one another in the form of a glistening ocean, about which the author has above announced something.

6. Apart from these, when Jesus goes with the soul to the field and the battle the majestic light-luster contracts; instead Jesus girds his loins in us with the essence of truth and puts on the breast-armor of righteousness, which is the daily garb [Montur] of a warrior of Christ, wherein he goes

forth with the shield of faith in the hand of his will: therein is our adornment in Christ.

7. The wedding noble-clothes belong to the Virgin of the house, and the principium is her garment, and like the dark side of her bright light-mirror, over which the Holy Spirit hovers. As then God has his holy marriage bed in the center of each principium—in which all are become Jesus as sanctified men in this [principium] in body, soul, and spirit—there the powers are borne out of the head into all members, which God thus yields together exactly like in the essence of truth.

8. Finally the reader sees in which form the heavenly and hellish kingdoms stand in the outward revelation and in the highest and deepest struggle against one another, and lay siege to one another.

9. The war continues here among the kingdom of the three principles, which our highpraised Lord and Savior—which bears everything with the word of his power—has taken on his back and has renounced Satan in humanity,—

10. But he will still not give up his right, and so all his hellish poison—which are coagulated spirits of the *Abgrund*—shoot out streamlike at the virginal heart—

11. Which the love withstands, and dissolves Satan's poisonous arrows with the shield of faith in Christ and throws them back at the enemy again.

12. Which struggle lasts so long, until Satan spews out all his fierceness, and Jesus, our light and love-prince, overcomes in all the forms of his fierceness and removes them.

13. Hence our faith will be practiced ever deeper, until he becomes finally so thin as a light; that is the victory where-with we overcome Satan in all principles and finally storm him in hell.

14. Here must all evil spirits be thrown down by the scepter of the love of Jesus and bow their knees before him,—

15. There the love, which suffered everything, takes Satan and all the hordes of hell prisoner, and drives them together, so that the evil spirits coagulate in one another like



a sea, standing between this world and the hellish kingdom, and they must parade before Jesus.

16. Here triumphs then our victorious prince—as before came to pass in his time in the first and second principium—once more, and leads us as his children through the monstrous sea of hellmight.

17. There the evil spirits make room and must stand like riverbanks on both sides and are not permitted to move themselves without Jesus's will,—

18. Whereby Jesus Christ, God and man, is master over all his and our enemies in us in all three worlds,—

19. There he leads home our humanity, which the Father has pressed to the heart and married as a pure bride, in his blood brightmade clothes, and these God delivers up again wholly glorious, without a fleck or wrinkle, but rather holy and without blame. [Eph. 5/27; Apoc. 7/14; Apoc. 19/7, 8]

20. Which time is near, as the children of Jesus in the spirit mark, and their lamps are adorned with righteousness and holiness of truth, which Jesus works; there the spirit and the bride speaks: *Come, yes, come soon, Lord Jesus. Amen.*

## Of Inward Man

### According to the Image of God and Holy Dwelling in Him as in His Temple

1. This figure images the threefold inward angelic man, as he has been created of God and is renewed again or clarified in the rebirth.

2. But it has cost me such fiery earnestness before it was born into the light of day that I cannot express it; you will also experience this well, dear reader, if you will come on this journey.

3. The outward sphere or world is the anxious heart [Gemüt] with the seven forms of Nature, which the sensory governance with the reason has in itself spiritually as well as bodily.

4. And it is a mirror of the inner, dark fire and light world, also bound up in both the whole time of the outward

earthly life.

5. Thereby slips in a suffering distress, as is to be seen in the associated figure, that I have placed with its back toward us.
6. Soon it sees the devil out of his dark hell from below, out of the dark fireroot, soon from above or without, out of the constellation, because he stands in struggle and opposition, lying soon above, soon below;
7. And it always longs after the gentle lightground of the eternal love with steady desire and hunger, imagining itself gentled and refreshed, also drawn and manifested in itself,
8. Which heavenly being the fire then coils into itself, so it burns brightly and bears forth a beautiful white light.

*In another writing the author expresses himself thus:*

9. "The figure with the heart shows the eye of wonder, which I have shown with the back, in order that the desiring reader may clearly be educated by it.
10. "This is the eye of the body, of which Christ speaks in Matthew 6, and stands in the middle like a round sphere.
11. "Right in the middle—in front, depicted in the third figure—is a mirror of both inner principles.
12. "In the back is a figure of the constellation as the reason, which is signified with the stars.
13. "It stands half in light, half in darkness, in the back in a dark starluster, as a light-mirror backwards [reverse of Sophia's mirror]."

*Here the author continues:*

14. "Under the heart, in the loins, is a circle which represents the *Abgrund* as the devil's dwelling place.
15. "However, it is not to be understood as his being confined there, but rather as when he is in struggle through God's spirit thrown out, so he falls back into this *Abgrund*.
16. "As then also David in his Psalms asks: Throw my enemy behind me, or: Tread my enemy under my foot, well understood by the experienced, practiced combatants."

17. In the heart is the holy light-world or the eye as the temple of the Holy Spirit, wherein God dwells and alone is named in the light of God; it is the middlemost principium in the reborn new man.

18. And under is the holy magical wonder (see Jacob Böhme's *Incarnation*, I.3§19) which is in the reborn the place of God's love, where the Father bears forth his Son. In the unborn is it God's wrathfire.

19. Because it is the ground of heaven and hell and the visible world, where good and evil originate as light and darkness, life and death, blessedness and damnation.

20. And it is named the *Mysterium Magnum*, where two beings and wills are to be understood as the unity and the peaceable will, which introduces itself in a desire as far as the fire and the light, so by fire the natural life and by light the Holy Spiritual life of the unity are understood.

21. Thus is born out of the two wills, a fiery, high-flying, arrogant devil's will and a humble, sinking, angelic will, whereby the choice of the harvest originates.

22. Because man is in this world his own maker; he can place his desire in himself as in a unity or in God's unity in serenity, so that he is captivated either by wrath or by love.

23. Because what the heart invites, burns soon in the heart, equally be it in earthly or heavenly being, and bears forth out of itself such a spirit in words and works.

24. If now the will burns in love, it is clear paradise; but if it abandons love, it is pure hell.

25. This is the great firesoul according to the Father's eternal fire-nature; and in the heart is the eternal light-fire-nature according to the son's quality, although these are not separated from one another.

26. According to the third principium is it also the lustsoul as the *spiritus mundi* and burns in heat and cold.

27. It must be said that it is not material, but rather a spiritual fire, whose centrum or root is the eternal darkness, which God himself names a consuming fire.

28. "The magical fire-eye on the left side under the heart is

in its root God's wrathfire, which accordingly God himself named a wrathful and ardent God; and according to the light is a God's lovefire, according to which He alone is named God."

29. "The root Jakob Böhme named this spirit of the great world, which has mocked Adam after his fall [1 Mos. 3/22]; just as the cherub with the flaming sword, just as the destroying angel in Egypt, just as the angel who gave the children of Israel the laws on Mount Sinai."

30. "With this man Jacob had struggled the whole night and Christ too on Mount Olive, which each true disciple of Christ will also encounter in his process. And it is certainly not two, but rather one fire, but to be understood in two qualities."

31. "And after this fire-eye stands the soul of God the Father; also all zealots after righteousness and truth have their zeal out of the Father's wrathfire."

32. "But they long blindly after the root of the fire, called by Jakob Böhme the officials of nature, which God uses to make his children practices and to reveal his wrath-wonders, as the brothers of Joseph and the Pharisees shown in the writings of the learned. In such men, shown in the second figure, is only a fierce sulphuric fire."

33. This is the description of the three worlds in men according to body, soul, and spirit, and a brief explanation of this figure.

34. Through these three worlds now stand the soul and is in all three fast bound; and whichever it gives itself and its desire over to, its servant is it.

35. These three beginnings or worlds were in Adam in one equilibrium, and none was revealed in the other. The dark world is in the fire, and the fire stands hidden in the light.

36. And all three have a joy-rich spirit in paradise as in the heart, wherein paradise and the heavenly Sophia's dwelling are revealed and borne forth.

37. Now what these give for a lovely taste, smell, hearing, seeing, and feeling in the heart and whole body I cannot



describe.

38. The reader must only penetrate into the rebirth earnestly and come to the wedding of the lamb, so he will experience what comes to pass in the heavenly marriage, and must himself stammer, because he cannot speak it forth either.

39. The two backwards turned circles are the two eternal principles or eyes of the soul, love and wrath, light and darkness, which can be read about in Böhme in his first questions on the soul.

40. To which principles the soul now turns itself away, sees them therein and is estranged from them; because it stands backwards against the others.

41. And also no man can see further than in his mother and speak thereof; each principle leads to its own understanding, as is to be seen in Apg. 12/12-13.

42. Now if the reader will look back to the figure of the first chapter, so he will easily come to the understanding of how God reveals in us according to time and eternity, and how we are formed as his true holy image and likeness and out of all three worlds.

43. Therein alone it lies, that we turn about with our soul out of the constellated reason and place our will and our desire in the inward lightground.

44. Then the Holy Spirit comes immediately into our heart, kisses and embraces our will and our desire and places us again before our beloved heavenly Father in hidden, majestic light through Jesus, as Joseph led his father and his five young brothers before Pharaoh;

45. Who is immediately delighted that his lost son is again come to him in humility, and the outer nature with the five senses kisses in a friendly and feeling manner, as is all known well enough by the reborn children.

46. Now it should also be pointed out to the reader how the fall has taken his primal condition in such beautiful images, that it was in no way God's will, as the reason teaches, but rather Adam's own fault, who God created

very good, and who had received free will, himself chose to impregnate and generate.

47. Because he had both tinctures in himself and was a masculine virgin, with wisdom and understanding, so that he had mastery over fish, birds, and all animals, and also could name them according to his own quality, as Moses in 1. 2. 20 writes, and sets forth the nature of the fall in wholly clear words.

48. Namely, that God spoke: It wouldn't be good that Adam be alone, so he will create him a helpmeet.

49. So is the question: how is it that what God has created good, could become bad, since the temptationstree with the ban still hasn't been created?

50. So we must—to cite Christ's opening in Luk. 15. 12, *kai dideilen autois ton bion*—say that Adam lusted, separated the lifeform, and had to be separated into a woman, so that he is like all animals.

51. On which account it must also follow—but against God's first order and image, that thus the fall is not to be sought first in the bite of the apple.

52. Because although Adam had not eaten of the forbidden fruit with his outward mouth, his imagination went so strongly in the forbidden tree that he was overcome and died in his inner powerlife, or, as the Scripture says, fell asleep.

53. Now we want to look further, whence then the lust to the separation of the lifeforms in Adam appeared. So must we say that they are awakened out of the principles or lifeforms themselves in him, and in no way out of God, the eternal love who is good and can will no evil.

54. I have already said in an earlier chapter that the fire is good and unavoidable so long as it illuminates, warms, and does men good service.

55. Thus is also God's wrathfire necessary, useful, and good, if it burns in our soul in love and humility as in God and not out of its right place.

56. Now is the wrathfire a bearer of the lovefire or light

and a father of the son; but if the wrath overmasters the light and throws it under it, or wants to devour it, so arises struggle and disorder in the essences of the light, and so it must go out,

57. So that hereafter the fire has nothing more to do in its essence in its burning, and is a darkness, as is to be seen in sulphur; as the devil also is, which can be seen in Genesis 1/2, so that it is wholly dark to the depths.

58. This wrathfire as the dark principium was now in Adam the first mover toward lust; because it stood hidden in him in the light, but wanted to be revealed and to work in its own might.

59. The second mover was the *spiritus mundi*, or the airsoul, that stands with its root in the dark principium, which should nourish Adam, in both inner lives, but was devouring and had to be made obedient.

60. He also wanted to be revealed and lead his own government after the outward senses, in order that each quality in his character be perceived, tasted, and known.

61. But the middlemost as the light-principium stood in the way and led as master in both others.

62. This struggle and hunger after governance was now in Adam's soul, but without compulsion; Adam could, through the power of the light-principium, wherein God alone is named God, well master them.

63. But what did Adam do? He imagined so long in the earthly desire and the struggle of the *spiritus mundi*, until finally he was impregnated and overcome in powerlessness, as if fallen asleep, and was separated.

64. Whoever understands rightly this ground of the principles, and conceives it, to him will all secret things of the Scriptures be clearly discernable.

65. On which account, out of this separation of the principles, is the threefold man awakened, as we see in the three sons of Noah, from whom the world is populated, that have spread out in the three lifeforms.

66. And although the manifold sexes and kinds of people

are in the world, wherein appears a mingled life, so stand all under these three principles, which means that one principle in each has governance over the others.

67. Because all three principles are in each man, but not all three working, weaving, and perceiving.

68. Now as Adam has done, so also do we—unfortunately—every day, all of us, and even the reborn are in part not excluded, and reveal all three principles.

69. We see the outward kingdom, long after money, good, reputation, good days and the good life, serve the spirit of this world, go to church and to mass, and pray to the *spiritus mundi* in blindness out of prayerbooks, so that he will bless us and our unrighteousness and will preserve our temporal Mammon.

70. We serve the devil under a likeness and appearance or mantle of false holiness, of concern, wisdom, and piety, because we won't permit ourselves to speak from the heart nor call darkness darkness, so that it is with us as the proverb says: *Whoever fiddles [really tells] the truth, he's hit on the head with a bow.*

71. And so we are often devoured, in order to rescue our reputation and good name, to tread in the light, so we act so wisely in order that no one can criticize us [lit.: can grab our leather]; which means, we should not judge others, so that we are not ourselves judged, which has an appearance of piety.

72. Hence the devil remains hidden, and we are fine, pious people, who live gently without the cross, without persecution, holy and without trouble want to go into the kingdom of God.

73. But we want to dissemble to the beloved God over the heavenly kingdom; because we want to be blessed; we give him many good words, speak of the disciples of Christ, act with the righteous Christian community, also do good, so that men will praise us.

74. And we think God will take us into heaven without mortification of the selfhood by grace, which death will



make certain in his end.

75. But listen, God asks no mouth-discipleship or lipservice, but rather wants to have body, soul, and spirit for all eternity, and desires that we should be the likeness or image of his son Jesu, as much in this time as there in glory. [1 Joh. 3]

76. Because the servant is not better than his master; if we have taken Beelzebub as our lord, so we act also as his servant.

77. And I must remark that I in my time have known very few who with the woman of Apoc. 12 tread upon the moon and have trust in God for a piece of bread.

78. Because although there is no nearer way to come out of property and to be saved from the worldspirit's governance than through the way of the poverty of Christ, so almost every man shames himself, despises such men or takes them for pharisaic holy ones, even though one cannot without such complete uncovering [stripping away of worldliness] enter into heaven.

79. But I wish from the heart that all people should become the likeness of Christ in everything and may strive to love the beloved bridegroom above all else; they should certainly embrace Christ's poverty with joy and thank God eternally for it.

80. He himself bears all cares for his poor Christians, gives them his holiest of all faith in the heart, and doesn't let them beg.

81. Whoever has my commandments, and holds them, him I love; and whoever has love for me, will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him, teaches Christ [Joh. 14, 21]

82. Where no love of Jesus burns in the heart, there is no desire to be his follower, also no power in the will to pray to God in his Holy Spirit and governance, because He leads us out of the world and out of ourselves in the life of Jesus Christ.

83. We struggle against our nature, as we see in Christ

himself, when he wrestled on Mount Olive in our humanity with God's wrath. And hence it is that so few become blessed, because the love their earthly life more than the life of Christ.

84. Now thus is the love for the earthly life of man made strong, so that he esteems no trouble, work, danger, or care, only temporal and unrighteous Mammon, reputation, luxury, and lust,

85. Thus the love of Jesus makes a Christian strong, so he willingly can take on and bear all suffering, cross, poverty, persecution, and grief.

86. Because love make's Christ's yoke gentle and easy; love overcomes all fear, anxiety, and timidity, and awakens instead a new desire after more sufering.

87. Because man receives always trust, joy, and power in his heart, and experiences that God never abandons him, but rather rescues him out of hell, death, and need, and gives him victory over the others.

88. Also if a faithful one could move mountains, but had not love in himself, so he would be only a ringing bell. This love is mightier than death; no stream of water could put it out.

89. And if you receive in your heart and are enkindled in your soul, so see well that you do not again put it out or let it be quenched; for the devil hungers after it.

90. Now I want to point out to you the ground of how it goes in the rebirth and how I have myself experienced it: if the soul turns inwards with the lost son and begins to think again of his Father's house, so he has no power nor possibility to go forward: Adam has prohibited it.

91. But Christ comes with his spirit immediately to help in the heart and enkindles the lifeform of the soul, so that the light principium, which earlier had been immoveable and hidden, is again active and perceptive.

92. Through this the soul receives powers, so it can make its way and approach God in prayer, but stands still in the dark body and can still not yet know its own love and will

nor fundamental humility nor participate in God's beloved will.

93. So Christ kindles with his lightfire the magical fire-eye—which the devil murdered in Adam and stirred up the wrath,—so that it burns brightly in the love and illuminates the heart, beams through the soul, and glows throughout.

94. There it sees for the first time its ugly form, as it is held fast by a hundred bestial qualities. Ah, how it laments, how it cries and weeps and would like to creep into a mousehole, if only its hair and skin would stay behind.

95. Yes, it wants to clothe itself, if it had the possibility, but it would only like to be clothed with its heavenly Sophia.

96. Ah! what pledges you make, what fidelity you praise! Yes, you consent, want to be her dear spiritual bride, to cut off and deny everything earthly, willingly take up the cross, to follow in death and need, with body, soul, and spirit wholly given, to remain true to the end.

97. Which the dear Sophia hears from her paramour with joy, and kisses him inwardly, draws in the soul to her being, and covers all sins.

98. Now if the soul lingers with its dear bride in the rosegarden and collects and holds beautiful flowers and aphorisms [Kraftsprüche] in its heart, so the dear bride takes her dear wooer, the soul, together out of the whole body.

99. There it sees a fiery globe—see the third figure and observe the majestic wondereye of Jakob Böhme—and immerses it in the fiery ocean—as has happened to me also in five days five times, when I was praying in the evening; there I saw that it was crystalline blue like the bright heaven in the middle, but was a fiery water, which plays over the soul as a fiery small wave; the lovely task and perception I cannot express.

100. And she baptizes the soul with a holy magical fire, also with his Holy Spirit in the heart, as is discussed above §36, and leads it into the flesh-wilderness, so that it is tested by the devil in the *spiritus mundi*.

101. There is required a right earnestness; because the bride ascends into her principium; then comes the devil in an angel's form and speaks to it: *Why are you so troubled? Make out of the stones bread; you have great faith and know it not.*

102. If then the soul remains in humility and hungers in the verbum domini [the Word of the Lord], so he yields and draws into another larvae, the soul dispenses with its great powers, so that it calls upon God for something particular, to manifest great wonderworks in the world.

103. If then the soul in humility gives itself to God, to do with and through it what He will, so must he [the devil] also yield.

104. But he comes in the cunning serpent's form and places before the soul in the third principium riches and money, reputation and outward positions, and also rich marriage.

105. Which appears to be none other than from God himself, without the desire and seeking of men, sent from heaven, so that the soul often stands in great wonder and many are stricken and caught thereby, of which after their great loss, they cannot complain enough.

106. Which is discussed further in the following chapter and here is only pointed out with the aim that the reader through foresight and diligence and earnest prayer will be admonished, and never forsake his own, or think that because he was seized by God, that the enemy is overcome and under his foot.

107. So long as an iron lies in the fire, it remains glowing; thus the soul also perceives, if it remains in the love of Jesus, all powers and is empowered to overcome the tempter and to bear everything on the cross.

108. But if it goes into the reason and imagines in the tempter's imaginings, so it is soon impregnated and embarrassed by earthly lust, which awakens desire and drives the will to work, so that many times out of the deepest of all love can come the greatest bitterness and fierceness, and our of loving brethren bitter enemies and



disciples.

109. So what they formerly with hand and mouth prized to the heavens and have testified to as truth, thrusts them into the lowest hell and they decry it for false, fantasy, and brainspinning, as I myself with great sorrow have experienced.

110. Hence must a beginning student, if he has received a kiss in his soul from his precious Sophia, be diligent against highflying pride, and not think that he be in the nuptials and high before he has gone to school and truly overcome the prince of fierceness or red dragon and has bound it in himself.

111. Because the devil works just like soldiers, who blindly storm a citadel; if they many times are driven back, and must lose their lives thereby, they hope nonetheless finally to exhaust the defender.

112. Hence an earnest candidate is not to become lazy and sleep, but rather must stay on his watch, stand in fear, and must recognize as clear temptations and reject what the devil in the *spiritus mundi* puts forth, even if it appears to be quite holy, and not to go against the clear letters of the Scriptures.

113. And if also the *spiritus mundi* should speak loudly within him, he should pay no attention, but rather pray diligently in opposition, and kept to his single, fast, unchangeable aim, so as to nevermore forsake his Jesus and dear bride.

114. But rather love all, yes, to hate his own life, and whatever leads him away from this chaste love into a creaturely love, he must wholly flee and shun.

115. Had I not with great earnestness over thirty years practiced this, would I never have come to this certainty, wherein I stand through God's grace; and the devil would have mocked Christ and all his dear children, also again enclosed my soul in his dark prison, out of which Christ has led me with his blood and death, and have darkened again my beautiful little pearl.

116. But it is better to lose the earthly life than Christ; for he can give us therefore eternal life.

117. The life of Jesu Christi is quite contrary to the natural life of this worldly rule; thus is He also in his children strange to all natural men.

118. As Christ himself points out in Matthew 25, where the rich speak and answer: *Lord, when have we seen you hungry, thirsty, sick, naked, or in prison?*

119. Because what the natural men love, a Christ hates; what the worldly men possess, the Christians deny. Because their change is in their wills or the heart's heaven, [Gemütshimmel] by God and all holy angels.

120. They seek only God's kingdom, and what is on high, don't busy themselves with trading commodities, seek not after treasures, which thieves break in and steal, nor are full of care over what they should eat, drink, or are attracted to, even if they are, like all men, dependent on the earthly body.

121. This they will hold everywhere as foolish and unreasonable, indeed, as the murder of their lives, which are God's gifts, created for daily use and help, despised and and be seen as only an unuseful, damned, pitiful pest in a good wellordered state.

122. They are useful to no one, hinder other good men, only use up good provisions, live off the rich's sweat and blood and dissipate other's stores with sinful laziness,

123. With which according to Paul's admonishment should not have to be done in the first place [2 Thess. 3/14] because they also enkindle this poisonous learning in others, and make the poor so many that the rich themselves would not be able to have enough provisions, if they should have to care for all the poor.

124. Which hard food is indigestible in a poor Christian's stomach, but he must be satisfied with it, and think it shouldn't go better with a servant than with his master.

125. Have they know known the Lord in the world, how they should recognize his poor, despised members, who are

infirm and clothed with an earthly, dark body like all men? One requires other eyes evidently, to recognize a poor Christian.

126. When God calls a man out of the world and inwards from his acre and plow to Christ's life and discipleship, so must man be as outwardly wholly blind, deaf, and dumb—

127. And not with his reason-eye look after the common ways of the world, which is a wholly different and strange regimen compared to the life of Jesus; he can very easily and quickly be impregnated and misled thereby.

128. But rather he must turn with his inward eye in his heart to his predecessor and leader Jesu, and attend exactly, how he wants to work and go in the soul.

129. And he must be very careful that he doesn't err out of a good opinion, whereby many souls are misled by Satan; he must only *follow*.

130. And if he thinks that he understands by reason better, so that it doesn't doesn't agree with the letter of the Scripture, and wants to understand the scriptures of God's spirit as God will, not as the reason conceives, which always only sees in the flesh,

131. And if it appears to be really offensive to reason, so he enters into prayer and asks for an opening of the holy understanding and will, so that God will lead him in his light, so that he can see in the darkness and can follow the spirit in his will.

132. Because you must often go in faith, where nothing is to be seen, and can then do nothing better than give yourself over to the will of God and do what He will.

133. Such a man is now a true temple of the triune God, in which is the Father of the flaming love and the Son of the beautiful bright light in the heart, wherefrom the Holy Ghost goes out in eternal Wisdom,

134. Which is the soul's helper, wherein it is spiritually impregnated and spiritually prays, asks, gives words and teachings in other souls.

135. Because the soul is clothed with the being of Christ,

and annointed with the Holy Ghost, and baptized with the holy lovefire, so that it is a Melchizadechian priest of God. 136. Therein is Jesus essentially the Gnadenstuhl??Mercy seat in his spiritual blood, and in his soulish spirit the true advocate by God, our heavenly Father.

137. And in his blood and death must the soul offer itself as an anathema of Christ for its sinning brother, just the same whether he is in the body or has departed it, and hangs by a thread.

138. For which a faithful prayer is highly necessary, as my true Savior has himself taught me, when it was to me also in the beginning wholly strange, because I too was taught in schools.

139. Alone my true leader opened the understanding in me or in the words of Christ [Luke 16/9] Make yourselves friends with the unrighteous Mammon, so that when you are lacking, he will receive you in the eternal house.

140. Now this cannot be practiced without incessant prayer, wherein the soul's willspirit always penetrates with its imagination into the pure love of Jesus, calls grace and compassion, and wrestles with the enkindled wrathsourc of God in his unborn brethren,

141. Which is a hard, earnest struggle, in which no soul can stand without the hero Jesus in the struggle.

142. Just like the priest in the Old Testament, who gave true service in the temple, making himself holy, pure, unstained and chaste, so that that God's wrath in him may not arise, and he can stand in holiness before God;

143. Thus is it in this Melchisadechian priestly office of the new bond even more necessary, because the whole Godly service is spiritual and a full renunciation of all earthly love is necessary.

144. Because the precious love of the heavenly Sophia is fiery against the soul and wants the soul to be again completed in love.

145. Now the Turba [Vortex] is slipped even into the earthly generation, wherein arises in the seed the struggle



of the three principles, and which always darkens the beautiful light in the soul:

146. Through this must then the heavenly Sophia enclose herself in her principium and let her bridegroom stand in shame and sadness outside—

147. As then also confidantes themselves made known to me that they cannot pray for many days, and are ashamed to raise their eyes to God.

148. The reader may wonder why the children of Israel, when they appeared before Jehovah on Mount Sinai, [2 Moses 19], could have no women nearby, and Abimelech, as David came to Nob, expressly asked whether his men could have their Women with them. [1 Sam. 21]

149. Because whoever nears to God and wishes to speak frankly with him, must be free of all stain and his conscience must be pure, so that the Turba, or God's Wrath has no purchase on his soul, and he can be covered in God's gaze or light.

150. Which I write out of experience, and point out to the reader that the love of Jesus is very contrary to fleshly love, which makes one wholly unsuitable for fasting and prayer. [1 Kor. 7]

151. And the reader ought not think that I act out of outwardly complete holiness and self-righteousness, that does not hold before God; in no way. Because we are all together in sin and born and suffer in mortal bodies full of affliction.

152. But rather I see in the inward man as the true temple of God, so that one should bring no strange fire before God, but rather each thought that isn't in the love of Jesus and God's fire, one must curse, and also nothing can salve and gentle the creaturely wrath [other] than the love in the light.

153. The inward man stands with his heavenly Sophia in a holy and hidden marriage is permitted not ONE impure thought, but rather must strive against them.

154. How should then an unchaste one be able to stand in

the allholiness of inner man? Since God is a jealous God, he wants to be loved alone above all.

155. Whoever penetrates in hell and death and wants to struggle with the prince of fierceness, it cannot be otherwise, so he should be girded with strong armor and must have holy weapons, and must look after himself in earnest opposition to the wrath-source with a fiery love and God and the next.

156. Otherwise he remains distant and such stand with God in engaged struggle with outward necessity according to his own power; so he will also receive his wages from God.

## The Fifth Chapter

### On Michael's Struggle and the Dragon

1. This spiritual struggle between love and anger, light and darkness, Yes and No, has its preparation in Heaven before the creation of the visible world in Lucifer's exalting of the creaturely separate will.
2. Which has its origin in the breaking of the eternal Love by going into an individual will, effecting, and forming and striving against God and his Son, Love, as also against his brethren beloved angels near him, who he would drive to apostasy from love, against which he warred.
3. And Lucifer was with his Angels thrown out of heaven to earth, which John reveals in Apoc. 12;
4. Where then this fierce Angry prince sought his holiness here, in Adam, who was created in his place as successor and human hierarch in this place and throne from which Lucifer had broken through secession and disobedience.
5. Thereupon are then awakened in people in the world, struggle, war, death, enmity, suffering, and lamentation, which is obvious to the eye, and with bloody tears cannot be adequately lamented.
6. It is this spiritual struggle, so hidden and strange, that no one can properly comprehend that has not been there and has learned, as what follows will show.
7. No one is permitted to lead in the name of a righteous, true Christ who has not in this struggle many times been put down and been raised up, and who also has not the power of Christ to overcome and to bind his enemies, and show them captured in Jesus' light.
8. Therefore the highest Good is a rich-loving, friendly, healthy, unmoving, still essence, in which is no darkness, anxiety, pain, struggle, and opposition; and we also cannot say that God creates a contrarium (opposition), since once Lucifer was a beautiful throne-prince in Heaven, and Adam on earth was in paradise.

9. So we would illuminate our reader with light, and let him partake of our experience; but we admonish our well-disposed reader to commit himself to prayer, and to earnestly call on God's Holy Spirit, for without this illumination these things will remain sealed and he will be without understanding.

10. Because in the holy writings there are some dark sayings, which require illumination, to the profit of the unilluminated reason in its ignorance—

11. Which philosophizes of the good God, that he is a creator of evil and horror, and also that he caused Lucifer's and Adam's fall, having foreordained some to blessedness and others to damnation—

12. And makes thus out of the good God a pure Devil, which is plainly evident in their writing and blind conclusions—yet God remains love, and in eternity can be nothing other than love.

13. Now it is well said, that nothing can be revealed in itself without opposition; and if there were no opposition in life, there would be no sensitivity nor desire, neither understanding nor the science thereof.

14. Because a single thing knows nothing more than one; and if it is itself in good, so it knows neither evil nor good, because it has nothing in itself, that it can sense.

15. Thus can we in the same way philosophize of God's will, and say: If the hidden God which only is in one single essence and will, does not will outward, nor lead the sameness into a differentiation of will, and such differentiation to a natural and creaturely life does not take place, and if this differentiation in life does not stand in conflict—how should then the hidden will of God, which in itself is only One, reveal himself?

16. But where in the one will is differentiation, there is also a resignation of a single will, and thus in a single will uncountable wills arise like the branches of trees:

17. So we see and understand that in such differentiation each resigned will appears in its own form, so the will-



struggle focusses in the form, hence in the apportioning each has a form different than the other, even though they all have the same Ground.

18. Likewise the evil or the opposition will goes against the good will, in order that it again presses toward its primordial condition [Urzustand] in God, and becomes covetous—because what in itself is only good and has no suffering, covets nothing, because it knows nothing better in or for itself, so that it could not desire or lust—

19. Thus one can also say of the one good will of God, that it can in itself covet nothing, in that it has nothing in itself that it could give something.

20. This is why He manifests himself in differentiation, thereby in the outflowing creating a disagreeableness (opposition), and the good becomes susceptible to and effective and willing in evil, namely it wishes to separate from evil and again enter the single will of God.

21. Because the single eternal will of God's outflow always goes out of himself in his revelation, so goes and flows also the holy power out of the eternal ONE into differentiation and into many centers.

22. And it causes the good in itself with its motility [Bewegtheit] to again seek after the stillpoint, and so it wants to move and penetrate back into the eternal. And in such working appears the sensitivity, knowledge, and willing.

23. God, insofar as He is God, has nothing before or after him, that he could will; if he would but will something, so is that flowed out from him and is a reflection [Gegenwurf: lit., "counter-throw"] of Him, wherein the eternal Will wills into his Something.

24. Now where the Something were only one, so the will would have no bringing to completion; and therein the fundamental will had to separate in a beginning, and be held in a being, in order that it could work in something, something with a likeness to the heart [Gemüt] of man.

25. If the heart did not flow out of itself, it would have no

senses; if it had no senses, it would have also no knowledge of itself, nor of other things, and could have no effect nor any bringing-to-completion.

26. The sensory outflow from the heart makes the heart willing or desiring, to lead the mind into an I-hood, whereby the heart with the senses manifests, and reveals and shows its senses in the manifesting [Wirken].

27. Now if all senses were only one sense, so they would have only one will and do always only one thing: [yet then] how could the wonder and powers of holy Wisdom be known through the heart and become needed in figures?

28. But because a Contrarium exists between light and darkness, so the Contrarium is disagreeable in [or to] itself, and one aspect always causes the other to desire to struggle against it, and wish to master it.

29. In which desire the senses and the heart are drawn in a natural and creaturely ground to one will, as to a mastery in its Something, as with its sense of the heart to wish to master all others.

30. Wherefore struggle and anxiety, and also oppositional will, exist in the heart, so that the whole heart is caused thereby to go again into a breaking-up [zerbrechung] of the senses, and to be led back into God, wherefrom it has arisen.

31. Hereby arise faith and hope; the anxious heart hopes for a solution, and again seeks after its origin according to God.

32. Thus is the holy revelation to be understood; because all things have their first beginning in the outflow of the holy Will, be it evil or good, love or suffering.

33. And certainly is the will of God no thing, neither nature nor creature, wherein there is no pain, suffering, nor oppositional will, but rather out of the outflow of the word flows understanding and knowledge.

34. And the same outflow is a beginning of the will, where the understanding has differentiation in form. So are the forms become desirous to have a return to their sameness.

35. And the same desire is incomprehensible to the selfhood as something which has conceived its own will.

36. And this individual will is now the ground of its selfhood, which is enclosed as a desiring will, also is a ground of the darkness and of the painful experiences—

37. And [in/ from] the nature-ground, from which the manifold qualities or individualities come, in such oppositionality is a will arisen out of the other, to be separated from the pain.

38. In such exhalations of the divine powers in nature and creature must we understand the twofold will in one being: namely, that the divine will [is] outside nature and creature, which thus only introduces a sensitivity to and effecting [Wirkung] of the revelation of power, color and virtue.—

39. And then the beginning will of nature in one place introduces the I-hood and the selfwill as an individual being-heart [Gemüt] wherein the dissimilarity or contrarium of the wills originates.

40. Because the inward will only desires a counter-image of its likeness to the good, wherein the good, outflowing divine will should work and reveal itself.

41. Which in turn causes the natural self-will also to develop this likeness through its incomprehension, whereby it makes itself materialistic and dark.

42. And so it is in this world that everywhere two beings stand in one, namely an eternal, divine, and spiritual and then a natural, temporal, composite creature with a beginning in its own will, so that two wills lie in ONE life: a beginning-created [anfänglicher] natural will and an eternal spiritual will.

43. And these two wills or beings will be recognized as two principles, as the reader can see in the attached figures.

44. Out of this opened ground can one clearly demonstrate to reason and answer that the fall of Lucifer and Adam was certainly not in the good will of God, but rather developed in the outflowing creaturely will of his primal condition[Urstand], in which Lucifer of his free will broke

his likeness of the love of God and went [led] into an individuality:

45. Whereby the darkness was stirred in him and took possession of his likeness.

46. And this false will of individuality is now Satan and devil, the old snake, the liar and murderer, that leads the world away from good and who brings to account our brother before God day and night [Apoc. 12]

47. He is also the fiery dragon with which Michael has struggled with his legions, calling upon the holy names.

48. In the same form was Adam's fall brought about, who was seduced through the devil's serpent-speech and his creaturely will was led into agreeability with him—

49. Where in the same hour his light-principium as the divine Wisdom faded in his false will and the third principium in the own-image as the quality of the stars and of the four elements awoke, whereupon the body became coarse and animal-like, and the senses false and earthly.

50. And he made his own desires dark, painful, severe, and hard, and became vain and unpeaceful, existed now in earthly power in an eternal ground, seeking peace in destructability [or perishable things], but finding none there.

51. The great love of God is come to help you out of this imprisoned life, and immediately after such apostasy again called you back into the inward-turning Ens [Being], breathed into the [verloschene: extinguished] essence of divine qualities, so your life is given a counter-image as a new burning-source [Quellbrunn] of the holy unity of love and peace.

52. Out of this is authentic life created and its suffering and unpeace is brought to rest in the centrum of one's unity and sensibility.

53. Now the reader is directed to the first figure of the first chapter, to see how man is a true image and likeness of God, after the whole being of all three principles, and to see that God in his inward ground is much closer to us than he



is outwardly above the stars—

54. And only through this you understand that you are still-standing with the lost son in your own will, effect, and life, humbly before God in your inward ground, and [must place] your mind and imagination in the love of Jesus, calling upon his mercy and warmheartedness [barmherzigkeit] and not again turn away or give up until experience of it is yours.

55. And if you endure from evening until morning, and contradict the earthly heart, so will you well experience how the love of the heavenly Father rushes out to your help, your mind enquickened, your heart embraced, and your fireground kissed and again enkindled, wherever it is thoroughly in earnest.

56. Otherwise you will only be a mocker of God, of whom the prophet said: these folk approach me with their lips, but their hearts remain far from me.

57. By nature are we all children of wrath, [even] if we are also baptised by the death of Christ.

58. The self-will presses first forward in the blooming of youth and leads its animal life in the wonder of the earthly constellation and the elements and lives completely in the astral impulse and the elements after the heathenish ground in good and evil, and is in this life a pure devil, Satan, and anti-blessed dragon, who opposes God in all activities and tasks.

59. Such a one has no other eye than [on] the future and can see no further than the results of this temporal past-world; he has also no other light than the sun and the stars, as the figure in the second chapter shows.

60. And if man does not turn back and place his will in God's life, at his death the sunlight disappears and [he] is pitch dark.

61. Therefore one sees so many dying with great anxiety, fear, and terror of the dark abgrund.

62. But as soon as one turns one's soul into love, the reason-light is demolished, and one's mind turns inwardly, the

eternal Word with all its powers is given to one, and the Holy Spirit streams into the reason.

63. And then is your understanding of the hidden Wisdom of God opened, so you will recognize the general apostasy of the so-called Christianity from the life of Jesu Christi, the confusion of the mind in outward divine service and the Babel strife of the many religions in the world over God and the true God-service.

64. Which in a returned and newborn soul continues as worshipping the spirit and truth of God, which one tastes, hears, sees, and smells.

65. Such a one will be baptized in the holy love-fire, and will glow throughout, will be annointed with the Holy Spirit and renewed in mind and heart, and can see out of three eyes and understand all hidden Wisdom of God, and out of an animal-devil is become an animal-angel [Tierengel] and true image of Jesu, which can be seen in the figures in the third chapter.

66. You will become completely different suddenly, loving what formerly you hated, and hating what you formerly loved.

67. You will be illuminated by God, understand and recognize that your own will is the same as the fiery dragon in Apoc. 12, with which the inward man in the power of Jesus must struggle.

68. And your heart and your mind can come to no peace in Christ until this red dragon of selfhood is overcome, bound, displayed, and is wholly captured and brought to Christ's footstool in the inward man, so that he can move neither head nor tail and is subject to God's will in the inner light principle.

69. Of this struggle God had spoken to our first parents, in Gen. 3: "I will place enmity between you as the serpent-devil and the woman, and between your seed and her seed."

70. Which struggle also in the spirit Jesu Apoc. 12 referred to, that which from Adam until now has endured, and that

the faithful will endure until the end.

71. Because this struggle is spiritual and takes place both inwardly between spirit and flesh in the mind and also outwardly between the seed of woman and the seed of the serpent, so I want to communicate to the reader the best I can what God's love gives me, and also my own experience.

72. But my Christian reader should recognize that I here write of the reborn heart, for those who with the prodigal son are on the way back to their beloved Father's house.

73. For those of earthly mind, I have not written; such a one will not comprehend; because an earthly man lives after the lust of the flesh and knows of no praxis other than by externals or accident.

74. But one who is reborn, who has broken out of the false fleshly lust and out of the devil's pigsty, and put his mind in all-holiness, where God dwells and the soul is present, the devil will seek to overcome through false whispering in the heart, through false imagination, disagreeable false thoughts, and contrariety.

75. Because the outward heart stands half in darkness and half in light, as one can see in the figures of the third chapter.

76. And it must suffer much evil in itself against its will; and although the devil cannot see into the light part of the soul, he still lurks in the dark part, making a mixing and confusing in the wheel of the heart and mind, and hindering good wherever he can.

77. Wherefore Paul and all the saints complained that they often did what they did not want.

78. If we wish to correctly understand this spiritual struggle's ground, we must search in the light of nature what our heart is, where in a moment can arise love and anger, light and darkness, joy and suffering,—

79. Yes, faster than lightning arise in us both good and evil thoughts without number:

80. So we will here find that it is a desiring will that is

imprisoned in the darkness, and always seeks after the light, and this will clings to the light in order to reveal how [through whence] it can be freed of the anxious suffering and may reach paradise or Temperament (right measure).

81. Whereby it is pacified from anxious activity [Treiben/drives] and can be stilled in its anxious desires, so that God's will can go into it, as we already have written §§25-31.—

82. Although an inexperienced one still needs more instruction and guidance, in which imagination of parables and similes should be helpful.

83. The heart hungers and desires strongly to reveal the light in itself, and the stronger the desire is, the greater will the dark, anxious suffering be, so that inexperienced hearts often fall into great doubt-exhaustion and let their courage fail—

84. Also to be separated out of prayer and struggle, as I also have done and my well-disposed reader should be advised that he need not give up courage for lost, and let the struggle go—

85. But rather that you should hold to another will, in order to break out of this anxious, painful darkness, whereby the first will goes back into the darkness.

86. So will you in earnest prayer and its continuity well experience what this feather [the author's pen] cannot express.

87. Ah how friendly the heavenly Sophia greets and kisses her Bridegroom, when they meet one another in the love-conjunction—which they well know, who are guests at this wedding.

88. This is now the fiery baptism, where the soul is baptized in the fiery love-ocean of God, and again is kindled in God's love-fire, wherein the noble, gentle light appears in the heart [Gemüt].

89. Then the bridegroom wanders with his beloved bride in the rosegarden, and collect all lovely little power-flowers [Kraftblümlein], which all my beloved companions for ten



years have experienced and confirmed.

90. They have exulted and jubilated in the light of Sophia and sang and sounded her love, so that all hearers have been inflamed with it too, and glorified God.

91. But this light does not yet remain continually in the heart; the heavenly Virgin ascends to her Äther, and tests first her bridegroom, to see whether he will be true in suffering as in joy, and in all difficulty or unpleasantness will continually follow her.

92. Then my beloved companions also have experienced, and underwent the testing, and soon, according as they remained continually and fast in the love, and cursed the least thought that was not in the love, would have united thrice (in the three times) with hand and mouth.

93. Where the bondmaker, my first-born son, who would set an example for and illuminate all others, should heed my true-hearted admonition, lest he carelessly lose himself to the fierceness and again dissipate what he had only so recently collected;

94. So that out of thirty only one alone remained firm, venturing good and blood, and finally experiencing the victory of the holy ghost.

95. The others are mostly dispersed, having wandered from the truth into lies and in their earthly change spoken against us, and miserably torn us apart: whereupon one could say much to the reader, if you could use it.

96. If someone ailing wishes to become healthy, he does not need poison, but rather proper medicine.

97. Thus, if we would be again freed from the anger of God, which took possession of [imprisoned] us in Adam, we must draw down the love of God through our strong desire in the anger-fire of our heart—

98. And do this continually, until the love overcomes the anger and has transmuted and changed all in love—

99. But it costs an unspeakable great earnestness and many years of hard struggle before a devil again becomes an angel and the fiery dragon of individuality gives up his

right, like Jacob and Christ on the Mount of Olives, also to be seen in the cross.

100. Because Love must wholly give itself up to the Wrath to be devoured; therefore the natural self will, which does not happily die, trembles and powerfully resists, so that God often needs piety and impiety, yes, must withdraw all creatures and take away all trust.

101. Until finally in the dying the selfhood is given up, and one is completely subject to the will of God, and wishes to do no more what the self wants, but rather what God wills.

102. For then the fiery dragon loses his kingdom and his throne in us, and the Love rises out of the death of selfhood, and becomes God's right in the heart [Gemüt] over the Wrath, and all of his power takes over—

103. And masters in the middle principium of the light the fireground of the first and the third principiums.

104. Then arises paradise in the heart, the light appears continually in the darkness, the trials clear away, and the angel comes to us and serves us.

105. Then the spirit jubilates, exults, sings praises and gives thank-offerings, that the foregoing is thrown away, (for which us and our brother are brought to account day and night before God), and that the truth, might, kingdom and mastery of our God and his annointed are ours.

106. The Christian reader should know, though, that I do not understand love with a phantasy of selfhood, but rather Jesus gives the soul again a helper in eternal Sophia, after the fall in our first parents, and essentially had married them into one in the tarnished [verblichenen] Soul-Ens.

107. And my reader should be truly warned and well understand me, that I in no way want to diminish or distort the marriage-state, but rather want to reveal to you what I have experienced, and what the Master has opened to me.

108. Because firstly we should know what Christ himself with his life and conduct taught, and also the teachings in the writings of the apostle,

109. That we should renounce everything, yes, hate our

own life and leave it and the *spiritus mundi* and all that is perishable behind, insofar as we want to be his disciples, and follow namely God's righteousness, yes, rise above our individual earthly life, giving up everything, even to our shirt, as I and others have also done.

110. We are allowed—like our Master—to possess nothing of our own in this world, otherwise we could in the struggle with God's Wrath neither conquer nor be victorious, (which for the married is an impossibility, because they cannot break loose of this bond.)

111. Rather we should according to Paul's rule, 1 Kor. 7, remain in the condition to which we are called by God, which my reader as a primary rule ought well to note.

112. And although different married men have been my companions and have fallen in love with Sophia, and also freely cut themselves off from and restrained themselves from converse with their women, they still did not stand the testing,—

113. But rather they fell again into the earthly Matrix, much maligned the beloved Sophia, and also exposed her to ridicule as a light-headed whore, horribly tore us apart, and pressed down the good seed, which God saw therein and had to cut off such rank and useless weeds.

114. Therefore we are obliged to keep out married men and admonished to humility; because God's gifts are multifold.

115. One should be true in the few things that are not his, and so then can he be well trusted with what is his; and he transforms according to his powers, as he can.

116. It is a wholly wonderful time of harvesting in all three principles at present; but each must only look to whom he serves; I have learnt this in my thirty year struggle with many sorrows, fights, wounds, and sufferings.

117. To he who has overcome the dragon of selfhood—as God's wrath—is an angel's crown given, which the heavenly Sophia gives to all her steadfast knights.

118. Like loves its likeness, a proverb says; and so it is only natural and hardly a miracle that Christ has a heartfelt love

for his likeness.

119. But because he does not find this likeness in us any more, are we children of wrath, and the righteousness that God holds dear, we lack, so He sends his Holy Spirit out, to wake up his beloved bride.

120. He sends out his angel to constrain virginal hearts: he plants his light in his children and invites cripples, the blind, and the lame to the wedding.

121. He embraces and kisses all his guests; but he entrusts no one in his poverty, or leads no one to the hidden bridal chamber, who has not first gone in the flesh-wasteland [Fleischwüste] in the school—and overcome in the tempter.

122. Which my beloved companions would not believe, who had inflamed the wrath in themselves and they wanted to compell the precious Sophia through wrath to lie in the bridal bed with them and to put on the angelcrown, but they had made a mighty error.

123. Therefore, my reader, you may imagine other errors as in a mirror in which to learn that you must walk in humility and watch over your arrogance.

124. It is certainly no trifle to make an angel out of a devil and to become a child of God and to sit with Christ in the right of his majesty, and to be a judge over his enemies.

125. Therefore must we also become in our life and in our conduct the image or likeness of Christ, in melancholy, persecution, poverty, suffering, hell and death, which the gentle flesh and blood find difficulty to undergo, preferring a short, temporal, past joy to eternal blessedness.

126. It is not good to see the world's race and prefer with the many the wide way to perdition rather than with the few to take the narrow way to heaven.

127. My beloved reader, one can make the wide way tasty and pleasant to us, and teach that the damned souls as also the faithless angels, who have not preserved their station or habitation, again will be brought back and should be restored as God's angels—<sup>21</sup>

128. And certainly [can do so] under a great appearance



[Schein: bill] of superabundant love through which rough hearts become still more wicked and risk their lives therefore.

129. Be careful, and consider in your heart the words of Christ: The servant is no better than his master; if you take Beelzebub for your master, you will not make yourself better than him. This time of suffering is not worth the mastery, as should be evident to all children of God.

130. You can throw your cares to God, and endure until you see Him, the Invisible, coming alone to God, and you will through long and many exercises learn more and more.

131. Because when the faith in our heart is seeded, it is nearly as small as a mustard seed, which with time will grow to a great tree.

132. But so few trees can grow without sun, stormwinds, thunder and hail and without the attraction of the sap out of the earth, so few can increase faith without the cross, trials, persecution and tests.

133. Through this Christ has erected his kingdom inwardly in us, so that we need not seek far to experience and taste him, nor need we cry loudly—

134. Moreover, He has also promised that what we in spirit and truth in the name of Jesu pray for and seek will be given to us by our heavenly Father.

135. It is impossible that God should lie; wherefore if we should pray and not receive, it is purely a matter of our own guilt, that either our soul-tincture is not wholly and completely placed in God, or otherwise that we are dependent on something earthly or upon a creature.

136. Even a dog does not abandon its pups; how should then God forsake one who day and night calls to Him and trusts him with his whole heart?

137. And if occasionally it appears in your experiments as if Heaven were steel and iron, and God has forgotten you, do not permit your heart to fear nor quail or doubt, and continue in prayer;

138. Rather, you must only continue with right, fiery ear-

nestness and like Jacob so long struggle with God, until God and man overcome, and faith has emerged victorious with love, of which we have a masterly example with the patient Job.

139. And so far must it come with a true warrior and struggle of Christi; otherwise the cherub of your heart and sense will be caught in constant doubt and disturbance and nevermore come to certainty, but remain unable to break out of the dark prison of the wrath.

140. The strong shield-bearer preserves your fortress and your vast kingdom; we must have the hero Jesus with us in the struggle and the mighty heavenly kingdom too; otherwise our direction is wrong, and the devil defiles us and Christi in us.

141. There is no weightier nor more grievous nor painful struggle than if we wish to marry the good God and the good, loving heart in one love, heart, and will together, and still permit a bitter worm to wax in one's heart:

142. Whereof a separation of the One love will into many bitter wills and a separation of the principal arises, like it came to pass in heaven under the beloved angels, and finally Lucifer with his horde was driven out of the light into the darkness.

143. And what also resulted among my companions, who through God's wonderful destiny, sought me out in my dwelling, though I thought to remain hidden and unknown—

144. Who sought to establish themselves beloved of Sophia, and in all ways I sought to go with them into the marriage, indeed, a whole ten years as earnest suitor had conducted myself with them—

145. And they freely with hand and mouth three times had been bound to one another, in order to conserve such a precious brotherly love against the bitterness and the least thought that was not in love, in order that they might at the first sign of such bitterness at once curse it—

146. And the good bondmaker had not thought that he

would himself be the first breaker, or that what had been built in the love of Jesus would be again destroyed in wrath, which in a short time came to pass.

147. Therein was such a bitter dragon will and devil awakened that one fled and flew away from another, and the earlier revealed love was transformed into a blatant murder, slander, calumny, prejudice, and persecution, and the awakening vexation or anger of the formerly constructed good was far surpassed.

148. Thereby had such anger in nature been inflamed and still arises, that although I and one steadfast brother still tread in the Process Christi, our life had to be waged in struggle against the dragon-will even until blood was shed.

149. And if our true help and hero had not so earnestly in the plan worked with us, we would have been unable to stand the test.

150. Because the more we have been influenced in the spirit of the love of Sophia, the more arrogant were they in the angry, dragonish selfhood, until God finally had to step in and cut off some of the weeds, or we would not have been able to bear the trial.

151. Which our posterity should take as a learning-mirror, because the bridegroom before the door will establish wholly wonderful movements in the spirit, and while the foolish virgins run together with one another after their likeness, the wise virgins and the bridegroom will hate them and drive them forth.

152. Our creaturely own will—when it is in God, the eternal love, and sinks itself in the inward ground, stands still in his own Will and Working, and wholly gives God his identity, which through unremitting hunger, thirst, pleading, sighing, and longing must pass—is an angel of God, a bridal carrier of the holy ghost, bridegroom of Sophia, and an implement of God the Father—

153. Whereby he opens and gives out his wonder of love through the seven Spirits or Forms of Nature [Planets] according to the three principles.

154. And so long as man through earnest prayer blows on this holy fire and holds a steady flame, so long remains also the heavenly Sophia in the heart, illuminating; and so long will the devil not find it so easy to approach or to contact such a one.

155. And when it comes to pass that his [the devil's] raw, fiery, poison-rays and hellish thoughts knock upon his heart [Gemüt] so the spirits stir, call, and cry out for help, and send the mind to God—

156. Who instantly sends help, so that often in the soul is a great uproar, until the enemy is hunted down and driven forth.

157. But if the own will breaks out of the light of God in the innermost soul-ground and out in the seven Forms of the Planets wends its way, so it makes itself into a wrathful, fiery, highflying dragon animal, devil, and Satan, the old Serpent of Apoc. 12, who thinks himself above God, and strives against God in his beloved children, and is a bride-wagon, temple, and dwelling of the devil,—

158. Whereby the devil mocks God and all good hearts, and also through them seeks in this world to do what otherwise would be impossible [for him].

159. So therefore may my well-disposed reader truly be admonished that he must only seek essentially to learn to know himself, so he will find and recognize in himself this seven-headed dragon-animal with the whore,—

160. With which he must wage war and never lay down his weapons or seek peace [while] in the flesh, until he has passed beyond the stinking earth with its ingress and egress and is truly in the inner temple or heaven; then will he have glory before God.

161. The animal and the whore in the outer gross world will God in his time throw into the fiery slough.

162. The weapons of the tester are part outward and bodily, part inward and spiritual.

163. Outwardly are persecution, prison, bonds, disgrace, mockery, banning, and death; because he [the devil] has a



claim to the outward earthly life, and if we desert and abandon it, his might is broken.

164. When he loses with these blows, and sees that he with his lion's blows to the heart cannot make it fear, then he takes on a serpent form and lies in the testing-tree, imagining to the soul a great inheritance, rich marriage, and great services.

165. Ah, how well he knows us, painting and piping sweet allurements before our reason, alluring our heart, mind, and imagination so that we should bite the beautiful Venus-apple!

166. Thereby he has misled and imprisoned very good hearts [Gemüte], who wretchedly bemoan their loss and injury until the end.

167. And even with this alluring carrion have I withstood the tempter for long years, until God's love loosened my bonds and married me to his heavenly Virgin.

168. If one repels this tempting, then he tries one's wholeness [Heil] with his spiritual elements, pride, avarice, envy, wrath, and opposes in the heart [Gemüt] the great powers of God, also great holiness and virtue—

169. So that the heart will raise itself up, over all thrones, and so that it will despise all that is not like the fire's might;

170. And so that he with cunning wants to obtain his neighbor's good, and whoever wants to punish him he will make black with calumnies or with fiery terror murder him and throw him to the ground;

171. And if he finds opposition, so the devil is inflamed and everything that does not stand fast in love, is so consumed in the Wrath-fire that the striver after Christ's life and way is made so black that no good people could recognize him any more.

172. He strikes one inwardly with anguish, fear, terror, timidity, doubt, unbelief, and belly-cares, through the reason into the heart, because he wants to compel you, bring you down, and make you beg him for a piece of bread.

173. He makes God into an angry, cold-hearted tyrant, so that often heaven and earth become tight [eng], which means: *I cry, but my help is far.*

174. But God will not permit the faithful to be tested beyond capacity; and when it comes to a head, he sends his wonderful rescue, and makes out of enemies friends, or cuts off the weeds.

175. You, my beloved reader, can in all these testings do nothing other than ask, as I also continually did, and in my heart have remained fast, knowing that God is love, who has not forsaken me in my need.

176. To Him be glory, praise, thanksgiving and hymns in all eternity. Amen!

## The Sixth Chapter

### On Prayer

1. Because God has opened to me in the light of Mercy and Nature, and I have also learned through some experience, that a holy Christ in this mixed world cannot exist without opposition.—
2. And not only from without do unbelievably many nets and snares of the devil appear, but rather also in oneself the furious enemy is carried, nourished, fattened, and made strong,—one therefore swims in great danger, like a ship on the ocean—
3. Where always the devil, the world, God's anger, and your own flesh and blood in the deep abyss of darkness draw you down, there is in your heart a kindling holy little light, which the devil with all his might opposes, and hungers or devours or wants to absorb, as Apoc. 12 has it.—
4. So I have nothing better that I can do, than throw my own will always on God's beloved will, and with pleas and sighs unendingly hold onto the dominion of his Holy Spirit.
5. I also do not decide even the most trivial thing without prayer to and consent of my rich master, because I go a wholly unprepared way, and in Christ must follow a life of poverty, which is inconceivable to reason and even apparently in opposition to it.
6. Wherein I had to endure many obstacles from natural men, also friends and enemies stood against me, and I as a remarkable novice wanted to bring forth a wholly strange and for human nature impossible and unprepared way and teaching, to consider, to hate and to abandon, whatever in my thought did not measure up.
7. And although I had decided to go around the thunderstorm and to bury myself in the stillness, God had directed my purpose a wholly different way, and drew my longing

and love into the war, even if I like Jonas would have liked to flee it.

8. Because I learned that mine and God's wills strive together, and He indeed makes me strong, so I must finally wholly give up my will and allow God to do what he wishes, even if also it cannot be foreseen or comprehended by my reason wherein God's aim lies.

9. Until finally I, through His great compassion, passed through the time of great endurance, and landed in a safe harbor, where my soul finds peace and the Driver (Treiber) with his anxiety and doubt-afflictions cannot hinder or reach me.

10. But what it has cost in sweat, earnestness, and fiery prayer, is best known by one who knows the heart.

11. And I am highly delighted, I thank the highest with heartfelt warmth, that I have a constant, true companion who, under so many mercies, has remained

12. He who has truly awakened with me in prayer, has ventured good and blood, has preserved the reward and the victory of faith through Jesus, and can certainly testify what great compassion has befallen us.

13. Now the Holy Spirit and the necessity of prayer is a better teacher, and we need no prayer book or formula, because we are all of one conviction, and the Holy Spirit prays within us.

14. Because many heads have many minds, some seek the one God high above the stars, others in the air, and some, the least in number, seek and find him in themselves, so each should go his own way and pray, where his constellation is.

15. An animal man seeks no farther than in the aery heavens, namely in the Anima Mundi (World-soul) or in the elements.

16. Others, who look a bit deeper, penetrate to the *spiritus mundi* or World-Spirit, or in the starry heavens up to the Sun; from penetrating further yet they are stayed by the heavenly fire or law.



17. A devilish man exists in the dark world, for his magia seeks to bring forth only works and words of darkness, after his fleshly lust and evil will.

18. But the reborn go with their magia in themselves, in the true holy heaven of the holy light-tincture or light-powers, unto the holy trinity, grasping the independent, speaking Logos or Sophia in their desire.—

19. And born with the *Verbum Fiat* is the holy trinity with the heavenly Wisdom in all their prayers.

20. And he prays alone in spirit and in the truth of the right, true, triune God, and his prayer is yes and amen in heaven and on earth.

21. Those remaining restrict themselves to their usual words and make forms of their own wills, after the desires of the outward life, wherein there is no real power.

22. I have heard many otherwise well meaning men speak of their conduct, and they claim that they serve God in all their outward works, and can pray to him—

23. Which I wish not to speak against, because not everyone knows how to differentiate God and nature and the gradations of the World or Heaven, nor what is right prayer in spirit and in truth.

24. That one also also wants to have pity on the incomprehension of the simple and must see them as does Christ, our advocate to God, our heavenly Father, who has compassion for the blind sheep that have no true teacher or instructor.

25. There are in right faith still great differences, for each is in the true love clever or not, or stands in a shallow or in a deep knowledge, which it is unnecessary to lead one out of: God is and remains a giver of himself, if one only in earnest implores him.

26. Right prayer according to my experience and practice is not a matter of many words, but rather a sinking of the soul-spirit or will in God and a giving birth to the holy Trinity and Wisdom through the seven Forms of Nature (Planets),—

27. Which through the magia or Belief-desire comes to pass—in one in whom the will is held fast in the magia and desire—what the will bids.

28. But because the will is as thin as a thought, and must have a body wherein it can work, it clings to Christ's body through his promise, in the imagination, and struggles with its desire for God.

29. Yet its work through the desire is hard, arduous, dark, and fearful, and discovers in itself a powerful Doubt and No, which although I initially recognized myself bound to the birth of God, nonetheless had a turbulent power.

30. Because I wanted not No, but rather Yes, and found only more anxiety, I increased my desire the stronger, that I also must be reborn, and when I meditated inwardly a short while, the No and the Doubt fled, and I held fast to the Desire to be united with God's light.

31. There in the up-striving desire I met God's spirit, and passed through the fire in the Conjunction, where my anxious will experientially felt the loving joy in the light, and attained what was granted.

32. Then all was Yes and Amen, and not a trace of doubt.

33. Through this praxis, wherein God led me in prayer, was opened to me Böhme's ground of the seven Forms (Planets) and three principles, about which he writes in all his works.—

34. Whereupon I perceive much that the dear reader, if he be led himself in the praxis by God, will have difficulty comprehending, so deep is it.

35. Because I now have experienced that to go through the first dark principle, the severe anger of God, is a strict or severe path, and requires not only seriousness of purpose, but also an unfrightenable courage, which power does not always hold in people—

36. So let the loving disciple of experience teach you, that you must hold love strongly in your desire and Imagination, and never permit it to lapse.

37. Thus you will everywhere find courage—if frightened

by the Anger, if Doubt and Unbelief assail you, you need only curse them with confidence, and speculate with the Imagination in love; so you will experience that the Anger softens and falls away.

38. I must certainly in the beginning have suffered a hard blow, in which in the heart the Wrath had shoved a deadly sin against [in] the Holy Spirit, as if I had cursed God—

39. And I fell into a twisted or inverted humility therefore, because I had not read Böhme yet, and had not achieved the understanding of what are Cursing, Love, and Anger, God and Not-God.

40. To an unilluminated heart will our description certainly seem strange, as also to one who is half illuminated, who in such exercises is not yet capable of fully comprehending:—

41. I offer you a likeness with the seed: See, how it is satisfied in its mother, but it must die and pass through all seven forms of nature, before it can again bring forth fruit. No one can deny that truth lies in this saying.

42. Because the waking power in the seed is propelled through the help of the rain and the sunshine in its desire to awaken; if there were no magnetic desire in the seed, the seed would be entirely dead, and could not awaken.

43. Exactly so is it with the magical or magnetic desire of the soul's will, or heart of the creator and the one who is reborn—what the will holds to in its Imagination, namely the true, gentle light of God.

44. Thus if the beautiful, gentle light wherein the holy trinity with eternal Wisdom dwell, if these in you are revealed, so is your whole body light, wherein you have great joy.

45. But these will continue in your outward heart only a short while; then the red dragon as the soulish worm or the dark principle will hunger violently thereafter, and attack with its magnetic, great fierce hunger, in order to quench the light.

46. If you will now have your authentic light again shine in you, you must again have it revealed in you, so that in your

soul a great struggle takes place between Love and Anger over governance,—

47. Which means you must always be engaged in prayer, and dally little; because this requires a great deal of seriousness,—

48. This struggle continues a long time in you, until finally the anger is overcome, and must give in to Love, whereupon the great Compassion of God is born in the soul.

49. I write this out of my own experience, and allow that each may find his own criticism therefore, although I have suffered very much on this account, and under the dark deep mantle of the devil I must lie, because the dragon among my brethren arose; this dragon always wants to absorb my true light-pearl in its fierce storm—

50. But through my true Virgin earnest help to the victory has certainly broken through. To God be eternal thanks!

51. If you would take on yourself again Christ in the Christian-Constellation [Christenstand], you must be born again through water and spirit, so you are verily a priest of the Highest, who is given in oneself the right to enter into the Holiest.

52. Because the word is revealed essentially in your heart and mouth, and you are entrusted the incense-vessel.

53. That you stand as a true member of Christ for all men, Jews, Turks, and Heathens, that now stand without, in the forecourt of the fleshly, bringing prayers, pleadings, praise and works of reconciliation; and your soul for theirs in Christ Jesus as an Anathema can be put forth,—

54. Then at once develops in you the love of Jesus, and this love through prayer leads to the subsiding and resolution of the Anger in its fiery, sharp hunger.

55. You are not permitted to accumulate your spiritual fund in your own soul, or accumulate heavenly treasures for yourself alone, but rather must always permit your stream of prayer in all its currents to flow outward, and bring to God all your fruits of love and firstlings [first-born], so God can bless you and you will always partake in new pow-



ers;—

56. And you will through such exercises in one year go further within than in many years otherwise, which with me means becoming familiar with all experiences.

57. You ought not go outward, but rather inward, and let God's spirit go outward; this will well sustain your prayers, and reveal the beloved bride, to whom along with God you will give heartfelt thanks that you are brought through the difficult work into your soul's health.

58. And if it also comes to pass, that your selfhood as the red dragon is not overcome through love, and you would be beset by the animalistic eagerness and anger, —

59. Then you must remain only in the love of Jesus, and never permit your Imagination and your will to grasp your angry brethren by the heel, and with your love in prayer and spirit overcome your anger, until the love of Jesus arises in you and the anger is changed into gentle warm-heartedness.

60. And then you must bring to birth the love of Jesus within the anger, and bear your angry brethren again within Christ Jesus, the eternal love,—

61. And only think that you are saved thereby by God, and ought to take your brother's place, intercede for him, reconcile him with God, marry or reunite him with God.—

62. And that such is your office in this earthly cottage, wherein you will be true until the end, and Jesus has given mastery over all Might, Strength, Power and Principalities.

63. And when also your own will in one or another is opposed, so only let your will still, and see where the Angel might offer his advice with a message.

64. Then your prayer should not be turned back empty, but rather God's will shall be fulfilled.

65. Therein, my dear reader, you too ought to herewith know that a right, essential Christ is a troublesome and anxious worker in God's vineyard and temple, who strikes the children of unbelief and the devil with God's anger, and also throws down all high reason that would raise itself up,

and with the sword of the spirit cuts down all enemies of Jesus to the right and to the left.—

66. And you will have even less leisure and peace in this world, but must instead wake to fast and pray; in order that the devil out of the dark *Abgrund* doesn't attack you and devour your true light-pearl, of which he is above all an enemy.—

67. And your time is not to be spent with idlers and malcontents, who direct their course in the world wrongly, and seek to fatten themselves on the Kingdom's overflow.

68. Because if you linger with such, you must remain in the world, make the crooked straight, engage in avarice and usury, buy, sell, run and walk and live according to the worldly mind, whereby you would try to have in the world peace and in the flesh joy, truth, and dominion.

69. And you need only in order to go out of the world to follow Christ in the rebirth, and to disown everything temporal, even your shirt, which covers up your shame,—

70. In which life all men are wholly strange and he must go in great earthly poverty, but only in this way is it possible to attain the true little pearl of the deep knowledge of God.

71. Also the devil covers himself with his dark blasphemies, which in this world it is not possible to know, and seeks to rob souls out of his swinish appetite.

72. And know that the world is not worth such true souls; these God allows to remain hidden, so that the devil's great swine won't know them and can't rend them asunder.

73. Also it is a great mercy that if God allows a reign of Mammon, these hidden souls of the Poor are there to help and to revive:

74. What God's spirit alone brings about, that cannot be known from externally; and also no one becomes troublesome or complains out of need, but rather all are contented in God, which is how He makes them.

75. Because they are His and not the world's poor; they know God and He knows them, and they seek to be faithful to Him and to pray to Him unto the end.

APPENDIX:  
A Short and Simple Overview  
of Marriage, or  
How Sympathetic Christians  
With Pure Hearts and Conscience  
May Be Guided  
(*To the Goal of the Spiritual Marriage  
of the Faithful Souls with Christ*)

Some reflections on the misuse, wherein the sorceric cunning and the struggles of Satan, that old Serpent, are unveiled, whereby our first parents were ensnared, and people in these last, fundamentally evil times are taken prisoner in their whole will; with practical advice as to how faithful, Godfearing marriagepeople rescue themselves in Christ, and also how they can near their spouse and make themselves sober.

1. First and above all we must briefly here consider the holy ground—because the topic is elsewhere treated in its vastness and in detail, as particularly in the blessed godlyman Jacob Böhme’s writings and in the highly enlightened blessed Gichtel’s theosophic letters—and know that the first man Adam was created in the image of God with all holy powers and qualities; thus that He with the help of his heavenly Virgin Sophia would have been borne out in man through the magia of the spirit and thus this place of the world bye and bye would have been populated with God or angel men instead of fallen spirits, which inhabited it before the fall and dwelt in the light, if man had remained true to the heavenly Virgin. Hence in Scripture we read: *And God saw all that He had made, and it was good.* [1 Mos. 1/31]

2. But after the created animals and birds were placed before Adam, in order that he should give them names after their qualities, and he saw how little men and women

cavorted and played in love, Satan infected his heart, so that he also lusted after an outward woman with whom he could outwardly entertain himself.

3. His heavenly Virgin saw this unfaithfulness, and he lost her, and thus his power to reproduce out of himself; hence God spoke: *It is not good that man should be alone; I will create a helpmeet for him*—hence might continue the design of God to fill this world in place of the fallen spirits—and took a rib and built an outward woman, and he separated the masculine and feminine tinctures from one another. [1 Mos. 2/18]

4. In this condition he had still a somewhat weakened image of God and a paradisical body, which was formed out of the Quintessence of paradisical earth: wherein it still would have had in a paradisical heavenly way a likeness that he could bear out of himself, disregarding the separation of the tinctures, which he could have again united through prayer in Christ, the inward-spoken Word of God and Repairer [lit.: reborn] if he thus would penetrate with his will out of himself and nature: how God with the temptationtree had tested him to see whether he would go with his will over himself out of the fire into the light, where the flower of the heavenly tincture stands in Jesus, and no man or woman is any more, but only the Virgin, as Adam was before the fall, before woman was taken out of him: where they with God's will in Christ would be one being, as we become through the new birth in Christ, as Paul [says] reborn children, now in this world, but rather we who are born in this world, out of the nature into God. God's will in Christ is holy tincture after both forms, the light and the fire, and Adam's affiliated Virgin before the creation of the earthly woman, and therein is our right life, Psalm 30/6 in the Hebrew text, joined with the image out of God. Our creaturely will is also a tincture as an outborn spark of the holy power, and if we inspire this God-gift in us and wake it, so that it burns in the light, the Virgin is enkindled in our soul, wherein comes the wedding of



Christ with our soul, and hence the holy birth in our spirits, as Paul speaks in Gal. 4/19.

5. In nature is our will also tincture, but earthly and fleshly, wherein Satan interposes himself. In John 1/13 it is called the will of the fleshly and human, and in Ephes. 2/3 desire and will of the flesh, whereof we are children of nature and wrath. And since Satan could capture Eva as the weaker part in the quality of bestial nature, the serpent slipped in, which was the most cunning animal in the fields, as the spirit said in Moses, and spoke with much persuasion to conceive in one's own will, and thus she stretched out her hand and took the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and ate of it, and gave it also to Adam to eat. In the same instant the holy light was put out in both of them, in which continued the images in the rightly-created righteousness and holiness [Ephes. 4/24], and they saw how their paradisaical, brightly illuminated power-bodies were transmuted into a cursed, dark, animal-body with bestial reproductive members and hence they perceived that they had fallen under the sway of the spirit of this world, which was perplexing to them, and filled them with terror before the enkindled wrath of God concealed in the tree in the garden; there they were inwardly deceived by Satan, for he had begrudged them their happy condition in paradise and thus with malicious cunning had brought them out. They were ashamed by their newly acquired reproductive organs, and made aprons, as we still have today, to cover ourselves before the countenance of the holy angel: And because of this corporeality, so our animal body must die and rot in the grave.

6. Thus in this sad fall the reproduction of human sexuality could be none other than in the animalistic way, the dear God opposed with the serpent-treader Jesus as the repairer in Eva's matrix—understand in the holy element, which is supernatural—so that the parents in chaste desire could be impregnated together, but which is very weakly done, and they should bear forth God—namely the Godly image—

out of themselves, as also Eva intended, so that she received the man as Jehovah, [1 Mos. 4/1] but bore the spirit of the world, enkindled by Satan, whereof Cain, the child of the self-willed capacity, was born, which had Satan in himself. With the birth of Abel were they happy, although they didn't know what spirit was in him, on which account they gave him a name as a vanity or nothing; he was also by nature like a nothing; and such must we also be, if God's spirit should dwell in us. Such children are very rare, baptized by the Holy Spirit in the mother's body, and one finds not one among a thousand, for one glimpses God's mercy bound in them as their aim, like John the Baptist in the New Testament, who was to be the predecessor of Jesus. These children are formed like Jesus, baptized by God with heavenly fire, so that nature becomes to them a hell; on which account they live not according to the flesh, but rather the spirit; hence Abel took no wife, nor did John. The patriarch out of whom Jesus ought to be born according to the flesh, must have had women, when God had sharply salted the flesh. With Seth the first parents weren't so successful; he was only an image of Adam and a pious man in nature, who also went the way of nature, although he was already 105 years old, and thus the bestial rutting had died out before he beget Enos. Abraham was also of advanced age before he noticed that his woman Sara was unfruitful, and God shut this possibility from him until he was 99 years old; 86 years he counted, before the child of the selfish will was born out of the maiden. He gave his son Isaac a woman as he was forty years old, without doubt because he was himself old and in his lifetime wanted to see him married. But this Isaac didn't hasten to have his son Jakob, but rather let himself become seventy-eight years old, before he went to Padam in Syria, in order to take a woman out of his mother's house. But he engendered the Cainish spirit near the Abelish in Christ.

Here it is to be remarked that Esau and Jakob were born out of one seed: in the first the pressure [drang] of the spirit

of nature in the struggle of the principles above, but in the other God's spirit, on which account God loved Jakob and hated Esau, even as the children were strill in the mother's womb and had done neither good nor evil. This should give parents a holy fear, for they know that what is born of flesh is flesh. It must be born anew in Christ, otherwise it cannot come into God's kingdom. Blessed parents know that their children, born to them in the flesh, are born out of the flesh and natura again in the power of the first parent of the comforting repairer, Jesus, according to God's original intention and will. But the selfwill Jesus cannot reach, because it is of nature, on which account it must be renounced and overcome and wholly gone beyond and itself and its children in Christ's death wholly overthrown, otherwise is no escape from nature. Here is the heart made hot, which means that with pain are children born in the spirit as in nature.

7. Thus God bears the marriage-state with patience in nature, and cares for his order in nature, but wills Christ, in whom He has perceived us in his grace before the foundation of the world. In nature is God a wrathful and jealous God, who punishes the misdeeds of the father in the third and fourth generations; and is compassionate to many thousands who love him and observe his proclamations, which are: love God with you whole heart, soul, mind, and all powers, and love our neighbor as oneself [Matth. 22]. This love makes the heart chaste and withstands all impurity in nature and the sinful flesh. How the dear God loves us, and because he loves us, he disciplines us in nature as father, in order that we might long for his holiness and not be damned with the godless world. It is thus good to know here what the marriage-state has in itself, which is grounded in the generation of human sexes [1 Mos. 1/18 and 8/17]. And so far is it also born by holy patience and after the fall of man known as his ordinance—according to nature, but not according to the kingdom of grace. [See Psalm 51/7; John 3/3-6; Ephes. 2/3]. But the misuse of the

marriage-state, which men seek, to satisfy his bestial lust and lasciviousness of the sinful flesh, is out of Satan, that old serpent, and a whoredom before God, wherefore he is angered before man as a dumb, unreasonable brute which, as soon as it can strew its seed, satisfies its lust immediately, so then the woman doesn't want the man nor the man the woman any more—it is then a steer or a brute—so that man is himself ashamed before the animals, that he is the least bit like them. Which observation must drive him to moderate his nature, to diligently apply discipline, chasteness, and purity out of all powers.

8. This described misuse of the marriage-state is absolutely sinful and subject to God's punishment and judgement: as also the holy Paul expressly teaches that to be fleshly minded is death and an enmity against God, and thus those who are fleshly do not please God [Rom. 8/5-8]; and he reckons the unchastity to beong to the last gruesome times, when one will love lust more than God [2 Tim. 3/3-4] and places impurity and undiscipline under the works of the flesh with the addendum that those who do this will not inherit the kingdom of heaven [Gal. 5/19-21; Ephes. 5/5]. Ephesians warns us to abstain from all impurity, as the holy do [Ephes. 5/3] and in Colossians we read that those members who on earth are like whores, impure, scandalously lascivious, and full of evil lust, should die, for which [reason] shall the wrath of God come over the children of men [Col. 3/5]. Yes, he also advises the Thessalonians toward holiness so that everyone should know that he should hold his vessel—his wife—in holiness and respect and not in lustseeking like the heathens, who know nothing of God; because God has not called us to impurity, but rather to holiness [1 Thess. 4/3-7]. So he advises also the Romans that they should become honorable and not live in lascivity and laxity, but rather follow the Lord Jesus Christ and make the body wait, so that it doesn't become bestial [Rom. 13/13-14]. Thus advises also the holy apostle Peter that one should refrain from fleshly lust which struggles against



the soul [1 Pet. 2/11] so that one henceforth doesn't follow after human lust, but rather lives by the will of God [2 Pet. 4/2] and should flee the temporal lusts of the world, so one can participate again in the divine nature, [2 Pet. 1/4], for those who follow after the flesh in impure lust will in the day of judgement suffer mightily [2 Pet. 2/9-10]. So speaks also the holy John, that everything in the world—namely fleshlust, eyelust, and arrogant life, belong not to the Father but to the world [1 Joh. 2/16] Then we find in the history of Tobias that the devil has power over those who in lewdness want to take women, like the dumb beast [Tob. 6/17-18] and that's why the evil spirit Asmodeus killed the seven that wanted to lay with Sara, Raguel's daughter [Tob. 3/7-8]—and there are many other places in the holy Scriptures on the lust of the flesh, on which we will remain silent.

9. The sinful flesh-lust, lasciviousness, bestiality, unchastity, and impurity in the married state some want to be legitimized, [by citing] the holy apostle Paul, [1 Cor. 7/2-5], where he says that to avoid whoring each man should have his own woman, and each woman have her own man; that man leads women and women lead men to guilty friendship, so that a woman not have control of her body, but rather the man; and in the same way the man does not have control of his body, but rather the woman, and that one should not draw back from the other except when both out of agreement for a time have leisure to fast and pray and then come together again, so that Satan not tempt them to unchastity.

10. Further, [some say] that the holy apostle wants to hereby legitimize and patronize this sinful flesh-lust, bestiality, lewdness, unchastity and impurity in the marriage state of our time; [but in fact] in the above citations and more, he has in this chapter let his zealous ones see his opposition to this, but rather he has [spoken] according to the cleverness of these Corinthians—who according to heathenish custom were given to all manner of lewdness,

and didn't know that sleeping with one's father's wife or stepmother was a forbidden sin, until they were awakened to the truth by the apostle—who wanted to give them something against their unchastity, as the apostle himself in verse five says, and for a time condescended to them, because he still spoke with them as with fleshly men, and could not yet speak spiritually [1 Cor. 3/1] and thus *inter duo mala* [of two evils] took the lesser; as Moses himself did, allowing divorce on account of the hardness of the Jews' hearts. Thus the [higher law] wasn't observed from the beginning, as the savior himself says [Matth. 19/8] and also the holy Paul [1 Cor. 7/6] so that what he says in verses two to five are out of courtesy and not out of the commandment of the Lord.

11. It is further thus, [they say] that this condescension should be a rule wherein Christian hearts would be bound in the marriage state. The life of the first Christians in general demonstrated exactly the opposite, as one finds with astonishment that their hearts, as soon as they received only the word of Jesus in them, the fiery love for God drove them—which the best and also some learned masters in these points—that they should soon be spiritually cut off and men would want to know no women and women no men in nature, whereby the holy apostles awakened great persecution among the heathen, which they bore as true servants of Jesus, among whom Paul was not among the least. But had the above words to the Corinthians held, they should have soon could have been rescued from their enemy's hands, so that the women would have been inclined to their men and vice versa, but which would have been fleshly; if one in respect of the holy apostles thus were permitted to speak of this: but one discusses in respect to our time, not theirs.

I know in Christ that if a Paul were to arise among us, he would earnestly decry the fleshly world most earnestly for its dark works of the flesh and not claim it for good, nor patronize teachers of the flesh who speak of the word and

through it the reason that pious hearts married to someone unlike them, must suffer from the spouses and often must to save their own lives, accept being driven away by them and put into misery, which is a play of the evil enemy, that one ought to seek more among the heathens than among the Christians. Certainly the healthy reason of the heathen in nature teaches that the union of man and woman is a work of the free will, that one cannot force the one part to the other, as we know from merely natural people's example, so that they do no violence to one another and the woman never wants to touch her man, and one lives well and peacefully with the other.

What should one then not do, when he sees that he cannot defile his spouse? For with the rebirth the reproduction in the flesh stops, as the children of God know; there the will for all is given up to God at once and one goes not more in one's own will and does something. The fleshly union is self-willed, as a reborn man in Christ, who is light and life, finds in the light and hence watches and prays, so that he not fall into infection, and this means: He who belongs to Christ has crucified his flesh with its lust and desires [Gal. 5/24]. If married people in nature attain their aim and generated children in this marriage, the one part should give all the more to the other, particularly the man to the blessed woman. This sex even in nature cannot possibly satisfy a fleshly man, on which account he must learn to withhold himself in the flesh, much more still, when it is to do Christ's will.

12. The law clearly directs us that the conjugal work taken in its purest kind cannot be raised to God and that impurity is before God's clear eyes—before which heaven itself is not found pure—on which account Moses commanded on God's order that the people remain holy, before they neared Mount Sinai, and Moses expressly said that they could approach no women [2 Mos. 19/15]. God himself commanded Moses that he must make linen undergarments of a certain kind for Aaron and his sons, which would cover

the flesh of their shame, and this they had to wear, if they went in the tabernacle or to the altar for the holy service, so they didn't have to bear their misdeeds and die; and this should be an eternal way—so high was it laid—[2 Mos. 28/42-43] which is far from sleeping together. Another illustration is with David and his men, whom the priest Abimelech would not give holy bread when they were hungry until they certified that they had not been with women [1 Sam. 21/4]. The prophet and psalmist David had in the spirit seen back in the seed and in the matrix [womb] where he was born, and said with profound words: *I am born out of sinful seed, and my mother has received me in sin*, [Ps. 51/7]. His eye was simple and no rogue, hence his whole body was light [Matt. 6/22-23]. He was himself Sophia; thus said David: *You let me know the secret Wisdom*. [Ps. 51/8]

Lacking this eye, we grope in darkness. Our dear saviour himself puts the free under the sign of the great certainty and brings the careless despising of the future in Christ to the judgement [Luk. 17/26-30. Yea, he praises as blessed the body that has not been born, and the breast that has not given suck [Luke 23/29]. Also the holy Paul wants a bishop as an illustration of chastity and purity, should be the man of only ONE woman, and a server of the community should be only ONE man's wife [1 Tim. 3/2 and 5/9] and says further, if one becomes lascivious against Christ's will, so one incurs condemnation [verse 11]. So has the dear saviour, who wishes to take us out of all sin, himself as an illustration of holiness and purity taken no woman.

13. And because we should love after the teaching and example of the dear savior with our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind, and all our powers [Matt. 22/37; Mark 12/30] and should be holy and completed, like the Father in heaven is holy and complete [Matt. 5/48; 1 Pet. 1/14-16] and without sanctification no one will see God and thus we should seek after it [Heb. 12/14] and such a



godliving soul can in no way be blamed nor vexed, for enkindled with the light of God in the heart, it seeks its sanctification, and to follow Christ Jesus in the rebirth and renewal of man in the way of the Father, wanting to cut itself off for the heavenly kingdom [Matt. 19/12] on which account its conscience holds back from restoring the otherwise allowable duty of the marriage's conjugal relations, much less to fulfill the unchast, impure, lewd and bestial being and will of its spouse: and can here have no governance of nature's place, but rather here holds even more above all that which we said above in §8, also according to the saying of the dear savior himself: *Let the dead bury the dead, but you follow after me*, [Matt. 8/22] And further: *Whoever does not renounce, yea, hate his father, mother, husband, wife, child, and so forth, he can not be my child*. [Luke 14/26]. How then also only those who follow the lamb, where it goes, and can sing the new song, which on earth and out of men is bought by the blood of Christ and with women—or men—unstained, but rather, virginal are [Apoc. 14/3-4] .

14. God wants it to be day in many hearts and especially wants, with the teaching of Paul, to take away the blinders from our eyes, so that we may see in what darkness we wander, if we defend this impure, unchaste, lewd, and more than bestial being, so that we who through God's grace and power escape the ungodly being and renounce the filth of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and savior Jesus Christ, again through the lasciviousness of the fleshly lust through erroneous and pretended interpretations of the Scriptures not only provoke and let in such things to our own damnation, but even worse, with outward violence and penalty want to confront the authorities. O shame of all shames! One sees there that God's judgement is in them, as by the arrival of Jesus in the flesh began to burn in the Jewish folk, which is a sign that the dear savior is nearly before the door, in order to turn back the godless being in Jacob, his Christendom, as a hero and strong rescuer of his own, that turn to him with their whole

heart [Jes. 59/20; Rom. 11/26] and day and night call to him in their anxiety and need [Luke 18/7]. He is in his holiness appeared and has washed our filth pure with his blood [Apoc. 1/5] to the fulfillment of the saying, [Jes. 4/4] And this blood is that which cries to God in heaven over the violence and need of Satan, the hellish serpent; on which account the dear God can no longer hold back the help of the heavenly mother out of the great work, until finally without travail her children are gently born [Jes. 66/8]. Ah come, dear Lord Jesus, soon! Amen! Amen!

15. But, one asks, how is one to relate to a spouse one way or the other, who is awash in this fleshly lust and wants to know no renunciation? Answer: It is the hardest cross on earth, to stay in [married] bond with such a spirit. But through Jesus's support it can make a part of the other blessed and finally healed from this sickness, when the sick part only wants to be helped, if only it doesn't throw Jesus the heavenly physician out of the house and thus intentionally separate itself [see 1 Cor. 7/15-16]. The herbs awaken the disputed soul, which must suffer on account of the chasteness, in his own garden, which Jesus has in its heart [Song of Sol. 4/12] wherein it has little spice-beds [Song of Sol. 6/1-2], which our heavenly physician plants against all *Malum* [evil] of the damned and poisonous tincture of the serpent, both in man and woman. Faith, love, and hope bloom each morning anew and are clearly holy powers, that man sees always as good, and nothing evil can be permitted in the heart, whereby in the sickness the evil poison rises in the ground and Satan is thrown out. Faith is a corrosive and wine something to wash wounds with, and the love of Jesus in our hearts is oil, which is of a kind that drives evil wholly forth and heals the wound; hop is the bandage with which the sickness is bound. With these universals the holy Samaritan attends to each case: the specialia he lets us have in our lodging or home, so there married people must care for one another; and the herbs and spices of holy experience in the garden are gathered by

hand, out of which this simple eyesalve was also prepared, not with the intention of writing this out into the world and giving our holiness to the dogs, so they may rend it asunder [Matth. 7/6]. One is therefore careful and this is written only as for ourselves, as a house recipe. Other good hearts have also their gifts from God and it's not necessary to be taught of men; the dear need itself teaches us to pray, and as is written: *Seek, so ye will find*, and the more is sought, the more is found, so experience teaches the heart, where one is and has, but everything in God and his holy will. Hence we are but reminded and warned to be careful in the fear of God and to distinguish between clever or foolish virgins, and the latter to send to the apothecary or shopkeeper, who has wares openly for sale; there they can care for themselves.

16. The Lord keep us in his holy fear and give us all a mind and will in Christ, which can will no sin nor can sin, if we are thereby born out of God [Tob. 4/6; 1 John 3/9]. The dear God wants us all to be made strong in spirit, so that we may in this will in Christ overthrow Satan and can bind him and lay him thus before the feet of Jesus, to treat the serpent's head underfoot. Amen, yea, Amen!

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>For more background on theosophy, see Arthur Versluis, *Theosophia: Hidden Dimensions of Christianity* (Hudson: Lindisfarne, 1994); *Wisdom's Children: A Christian Esoteric Tradition* (Albany: SUNY, 1999), and *Wisdom's Book: The Sophia Anthology*, (St. Paul: Paragon House, 2000), as well as *The Wisdom of John Pordage*, (St. Paul: New Grail, 2003). Theosophy also figures in parts of *The Esoteric Origins of the American Renaissance*, (New York: Oxford UP, 2001). See on Native traditions Versluis, *Sacred Earth: The Spiritual Landscape of Native America*, (Rochester, VT: 1992), and *Native American Traditions*, (Element: 1993, 1995).

<sup>2</sup>See on Gichtel's early years, Bernard Gorceix, *Johann Georg Gichtel, Theosophe d'Amsterdam*, (Delphica: L'Age d'Homme, 1975) pp. 17-18. I have drawn on Gorceix's account, an important twentieth century book on Gichtel, but have relied primarily on original source material.

<sup>3</sup>See Johann Georg Gichtel, *Theosophia Practica*, Charles William Heckethorne, trs., 7 vols, 1868-1869, ms. copy in Dr Williams's Library, London, hereafter referred to as "Gichtel," following and collated with Leiden, 1722 edition, VII.34-35.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Gichtel II.742-744

<sup>6</sup>Gichtel VII.63-66

<sup>7</sup>Gichtel VII.73-74

<sup>8</sup>Gichtel VII.185-186

<sup>9</sup>Gichtel VII.187-188

<sup>10</sup>Gorceix, op. cit., p. 31

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Gichtel VII.212-214

<sup>13</sup>Gichtel VII.341

<sup>14</sup>See for more on Gichtel's monumental project, Gorceix, pp. 33-34

<sup>15</sup>Gichtel III.2092

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., III.2117

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>One such author is C.W. Leadbeater, of the Blavatskyan Theosophical Society.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. Henry Corbin's elaboration of the theosophic recognition that one must become what one knows in order to have authentic knowledge.



<sup>20</sup>Gichtel may here be alluding to the writing of Dr John Pordage, who in his treatise *Sophia* spoke of the possibilities for salvation of souls consumed by the wrath-fire after death, which Gichtel wrote that he experienced in the posthumous salvation of a friend who committed suicide, and for whom he prayed for some years.

<sup>21</sup>Gichtel here alludes to the doctrine of apocatastasis, embraced by his English contemporary Jane Leade, who held that in eternity all things would be restored, the hells emptied, and even those damned in hell or demons would be redeemed.

### Suggested Further Reading

Gichtel, Johann Georg, *Eine kurze Eröffnung und Anweisung der drei Prinzipien und Welten im Menschen*, (Berlin/Leipzig: Christian Ulrich Ringmacher, 1779).

—, *Theosophia Practica*, (Leiden: 1722).

Faas, Robert, ed., *The Divine Couple*, (St. Paul: Grailstone, 2001).

Antoine Faive, *Access to Western Esoteric Traditions*, (Albany: SUNY, 1993).

Bernard Gorceix, *Johann Georg Gichtel, Theosophe d'Amsterdam*, (Delphica: L'Age d'Homme, 1975).

Arthur Versluis, *Awakening the Contemplative Spirit* (St. Paul: New Grail, 2004).

—, *Restoring Paradise* (Albany: SUNY, 2004).

—, *Theosophia: Hidden Dimensions of Christianity* (Hudson: Lindisfarne, 1994).

—, *Wisdom's Children: A Christian Esoteric Tradition* (Albany: SUNY, 1999)..

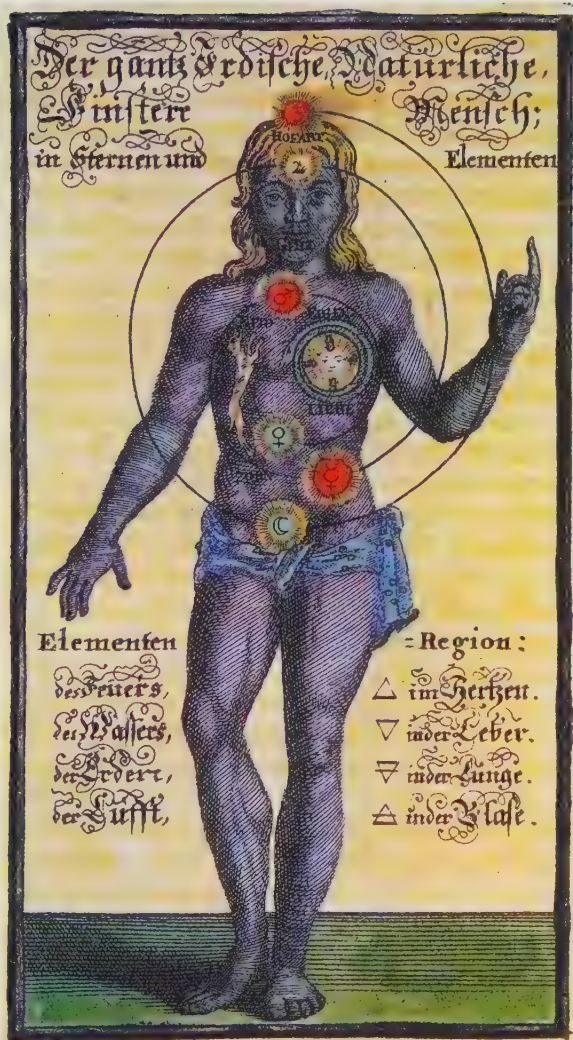
—, *Wisdom's Book: The Sophia Anthology*, (St. Paul: Paragon House, 2000).

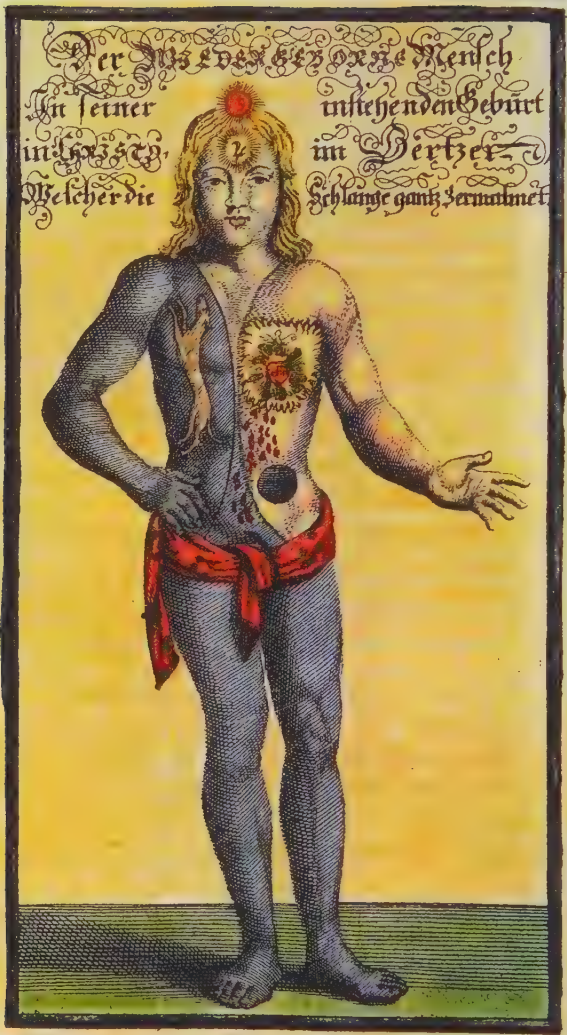
—, *The Wisdom of Jacob Böhme*, (St. Paul: New Grail, 2003).

—, *The Wisdom of John Pordage*, (St. Paul: New Grail, 2003).

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Johann Georg Gichtel (1638-1710) is one of the greatest mystics in the theosophic school of Jakob Böhme, and *Awakening to Divine Wisdom* is his introduction to this tradition of mystical practice based on devotion to Sophia, or Divine Wisdom. This work is most well-known for its central illustrations that depict the transmutation of the inner dimensions of the body through spiritual awakening, and some have even claimed that these illustrations show the Christian parallel to Asian traditions concerning the *chakras*. Without doubt, in *Awakening to Divine Wisdom*, Gichtel offers his most concise and direct guide to Christian mystical practice. This is a classic work of mysticism, and should be in the library of anyone interested in this field.

Translated and introduced by Arthur Versluis, author of *Wisdom's Children*, *Wisdom's Book*, and more than twenty other books, many on mysticism or esoteric religious traditions.

